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# The Nation



and

## THE ATHENÆUM



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### THE TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIETY

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v.

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#### Some famous Neurasthenics.

However, custom and use have brought us to accept the nervous as the nerve weak, though the nervous whom Dr. Schofield had in mind were probably more correctly the "higher neurasthenic" of the famous French savant. Of such was Michelet, the great French Historian, who confessed his need every day for what he called a "tugboat" even for his giant brain. So was even the mighty Darwin, who could only work at pressure for a few moments at a time. So were many of those flashing geniuses who at various times have "held the world in awe," including him who confessed that all his best work had been written in bed for the better conservation of his limited store of nervous energy.

To come down to a lower level, however, every brain worker, especially in these times of high pressure and tension, knows the difficulty of struggling bravely and often hopelessly against the under-tug of an ebbing nerve stream, knows how work that was easy somehow becomes difficult, knows how the "bogy" of failure ever looms up to affright and unnerve, knows how continuity of mental effort becomes less and less possible, and, worst of all, knows and recognises personally that deteriorations in his or her work which is or may be revealed in the work itself to those who provide an audience. What writer or painter, what musician, what actor, what preacher, what public speaker, has not felt the chill of that terror in their very bones?

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# The Nation and The Athenæum

THE NATION. VOL. XXXVIII., No. 8.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1925. [THE ATHENÆUM. No. 4986.

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE evacuation of the Cologne zone is to begin on December 1st, coincidently with the signature of the Locarno agreements. This announcement has been made formally possible by the fulfilment of the disarmament requirements of the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission and the consequent satisfaction of the Ambassadors' Conference. In fact, of course, it is the first fruit of Locarno, and the pretext of the disarmament clauses, which formerly masked a sinister conflict of interests, now appears merely as a diplomatic pleasantry. Alleviations are also to be introduced in the other occupied areas: a new German Commissioner is to be appointed in the Rhineland, and large measures of amnesty are promised; the number of troops of occupation will be considerably reduced, and German administration in occupied territory will be facilitated. These measures are directly attributed to the Locarno "spirit of goodwill and confidence," no diplomatic fiction being introduced in this connection. Great preparations are being made for the reception of the delegations which are coming to sign the Pact in London on December 1st. It is to be hoped that the present Governments in both France and Germany will at least contrive to outlive that date.

\* \* \*

On Wednesday the House of Commons voted its approval of the ratification of the Locarno Treaty by 375 to 13. The debate was mainly congratulatory, though, as Mr. Lloyd George said in adding "the humble leek" to Mr. Chamberlain's nosegay, "the Leader of the Opposition mixed a good many thistles with his bouquet." The point most stressed by Mr. MacDonald was the danger of alienating Russia, though this comes somewhat illogically from the author of the Geneva Protocol, which would have been far more menacing to Russia than is the Locarno Pact. It was useful, however, to give Mr. Chamberlain an opportunity of repudiating an indiscreet impromptu speech which Mr. Ormsby-Gore delivered in Manchester. It is not, said Mr. Chamberlain emphatically, the Government's

view that Locarno was engineered for the purpose of uniting Western civilization against Russia. Mr. Lloyd George was in excellent form, and managed to put some searching questions as to the scope of the Pact without departing from a completely cordial tone. He it was who elicited from Mr. Chamberlain a definite statement that every dispute was referable to arbitration or conciliation; no dispute was excluded; the interpretation of a treaty, including the Treaty of Versailles, was referable to judicial determination, and the circumstances which led to the occupation of the Ruhr would, under the Pact, have been subject to that process.

\* \* \*

The tragedy of M1, following on other submarine disasters at home and abroad, has brought from the Chairman of Lloyd's a proposal that all nations should unite in abolishing a class of vessel which has no commercial future, which has led to serious loss of life in time of peace, and has proved capable of gross abuse in war. It is appropriate that this proposal should come from the Chairman of that great institution which has done so much for the safety of life at sea; but we have to recognize that there are grave difficulties in the way of this country taking the lead in a campaign for the abolition of submarines. Strategically, Great Britain has more to gain and less to lose by such a measure than any other Power. The strongest opposition is likely to come from France, who relies on submarines to protect her coasts and communications with her African Colonies, and from the Minor Naval Powers, who regard the submarine as the only method of coast defence open to them. In these circumstances, we need to walk warily, lest a concentration on the single problem of the submarine should prejudice the prospects of an agreement for more general limitation of naval armaments. Mr. Mackinnon's appeal can do nothing but good if it enforces attention to the urgent necessity for such agreement and to the way in which the problem is affected by the potentialities and limitations of the submarine, and by the possibilities of restrictions on submarine warfare.



Meanwhile the Admiralty has announced that it will hold the usual Court of Inquiry into the disaster to M1. In the present stage of submarine engineering, we should have eliminated accidents due merely to lack of stability when submerging. The operations of the divers may establish the fact of some unforeseen and unforeseeable cause for the tragedy; if not, it will be necessary to consider, very seriously, the design of these large submarines, which attempt to combine with the special qualities of their class others usually found only in surface vessels. In a recent number of the *MARINE RUNDSCHAU*, Professor Oswald Flamm—a submarine designer of the greatest eminence—expressed grave doubts as to the design of X1, and suggested that a very radical departure from existing designs would be necessary if submarines were to go beyond a certain size, and develop certain fighting qualities, without loss of submerged stability. His contentions have been reproduced in the technical journal *ENGINEERING*, and unless the disaster to M1 can be traced definitely to some cause wholly unconnected with her design, there will be a widespread feeling of grave uneasiness with regard to the safety of our larger submarines.

Apart from Locarno, there has been little yet of interest in the proceedings in the House of Commons. At question-time on Tuesday, Sir Douglas Hogg gave a satisfactory account of the affair of the prosecution of the Fascists who ran off with the *DAILY HERALD* van. On the same day Colonel Lane-Fox stated that the cost of the coal subsidy for the first three months would amount to about £6 millions. This is disconcerting, for, despite the recent improvement in the coal market, the subsidy for the next few months must necessarily work out at a heavier rate. The rate of subsidy for any particular month is determined by the financial results of the previous quarter, with a one-month lag; October, for example, depending on the results for June, July, and August. Thus it was not till October that the deplorable August figures began to influence the cost to the Exchequer, and the influence of September, which was also a very bad month, will not have ceased to tell until February. After that we may expect a decline in the Treasury payments. But Mr. Churchill's observation, the other day, that the subsidy "might amount to £15 millions" must be taken, we fear, as a minimum estimate.

Last Monday the Railway National Wages Board began the hearing of the demands of the N.U.R. and the Railway Clerks' Association for a general improvement in wages and conditions, and the claim of the companies for a wage reduction of four shillings in industrial, and six shillings in rural areas. The Board is hearing the companies' claim first, but while technically it cannot be ranked as a counter-claim, it certainly partakes of that nature, for the N.U.R. programme was put forward first, though it was then held up owing to difficulties arising in connection with the railway shopmen. While the two claims are *sub judice*, comment on the issue is best withheld—the more so as only the evidence of the companies has so far been heard. It may, however, be pointed out that the Board is faced with an awkward position, for the A.S.L.E. & F. has made no demands for an increase. If, therefore, the Board gives judgment in favour of the N.U.R., Mr. Bromley will be mortally offended; and if in favour of the companies' claim, which applies to all grades of workers, Mr. Bromley will be able to say plausibly that if the N.U.R. had not demanded the millennium,

the companies would not have claimed a reduction! The Wages Board is there to seek justice, and doubtless should not consider the intricacies of inter-union politics. All the same, it is difficult to see how they can be completely ignored.

The report of the Court of Inquiry appointed to consider the wage dispute which led to the stoppage in the Wool Textile industry last August has now been issued. Both sides have bound themselves to accept the Court's findings, and though these only take the form of recommendations to the Joint Industrial Council, that body at its meeting this week-end has merely to endorse them in the form of an agreement. The Court recommend no change in the existing level of wages until January, 1927. The verdict thus goes against the employers, who finally insisted on a reduction of 5 per cent.; for the operatives, who made the original move by claiming an advance of a similar amount, eventually agreed to accept a continuation of the existing rates. It should, however, be remembered that trade prospects have been a little brighter during the last month or two, and the industry has by now recovered from the shock and dislocation of the great slump in wool values earlier in the year. In addition, for some of the employers, the pill is now sweetened by the prospect of safeguarding. The whole industry will, at least, be united in thankfulness that the period of uncertainty is now over, for critical negotiations have been going on ever since April, and it has never been possible to foresee the final outcome.

The German Cabinet have not altered or modified their decision with regard to the Locarno agreement, which will be laid before the Reichstag for ratification on or about November 23rd. The Government are absolutely confident that they will get a majority for it; and President von Hindenburg's recent speeches at Frankfurt show that he agrees with the Luther Ministry, and hopes that the mass of the people will continue to give it their support. The political leaders of the Left and Centre, from whence the majority for ratification will come, are curiously reticent: doubtless they are bargaining for places in a reconstructed Cabinet after the vote upon ratification has been taken, and do not wish to commit themselves before the process of bargaining is over. Their reticence is in strange contrast to the boisterous declarations of Nationalist policy which have appeared during the last week. Grand Admiral von Tirpitz and Count Westarp have both issued proclamations of root-and-branch opposition to the Locarno agreement. These manifestoes are probably of more use in rallying the Nationalist Party than in influencing public opinion: everything goes to show that the German people has made up its mind upon the issue before it.

It is now clear that French rule has practically ceased in Northern Syria. From Homs on the north, to Hasbeiya on the south, villages are being raided, burned, or put to ransom by the Druse leaders; and the roads and mountain gorges are swarming with brigands of local origin, reinforced by pillagers from the desert. The misery which this form of warfare inflicts upon the countryside simply beggars description. Even the measures taken to suppress it generally fall upon the villagers and peasants, who can find no middle course between having their villages burnt for not joining the rebellion, and seeing their headmen hanged, shot, or imprisoned for refusing to assist the authorities with information. The latest reports, which one can only



hope to be untrue, are that the French are arming the Christian villagers, and that Ibn Saud the Wahabi is watching for an opportunity to throw his fishing-net into the troubled waters. For the moment it would be idle to suggest remedies or solutions: all that can be done is to take every opportunity of reminding the French that Syria is not a French colony; and of urging that full publicity be given to their methods of suppressing the revolt, in order that the Damascus experiment shall not be repeated in every little Syrian township where a French officer in command loses his head.

\* \* \*

The result of the Australian elections does not appear to have been greatly affected by the "mystery million" brought to the polls as the result of the compulsory voting law. The Nationalist, Country Party, and Labour totals all show a large increase, indicating that political apathy in the past was not confined to any one section of the population. The results give the Government an increased majority in the House of Representatives and a much improved position in the Senate, but they show no such sweeping turnover as Mr. Bruce appears to have hoped for, and it will certainly be open to his opponents to suggest that he has forced on the country an unnecessary election. It can hardly be doubted that some seats have been won by the Government owing to the discreditable attempts of Labour extremists to exploit the seamen's strike in their own interests: Australian producers and exporters have for a long time been growing impatient at the perpetual trouble in the ports. On the other hand, the size of the Labour vote—some 45 per cent. of the total—suggests that the Australian people as a whole refuse to follow Mr. Bruce in identifying the entire Labour Party with the extremists and Communists. The elections should teach Labour the necessity of discipline; but Mr. Bruce may be riding for a fall if he interprets his victory as a mandate for deportations and "strong measures" with regard to industrial disputes.

\* \* \*

General Hertzog has now outlined his native policy. He has admitted that his segregation proposals depend on the provision of extensive additional areas for native reservations, though he has not stated how the land is to be provided. He forecasts a system of local native councils on the Transkei model, and a general Native Council for the whole Union with wide advisory and restricted legislative powers. The crux of his scheme, however, is his proposal to withdraw the parliamentary franchise from the Cape natives, in return for which the natives of the whole Union are to have the right to elect seven Europeans to represent their interests in an advisory capacity. Next month he is to expound his policy to the Native Congress; but the first expressions of native opinion have been extremely hostile to the proposals. On the other hand, a section of the Nationalists are already up in arms at what they consider undue concessions. No pronouncement has yet come from General Smuts and the Opposition, whose co-operation General Hertzog has invited, but the question of the Cape franchise is likely, unless a more adequate *quid pro quo* can be found, to prove an insuperable obstacle either to an agreed native policy or to any such regrouping of parties as has recently been suggested.

\* \* \*

The MANCHESTER GUARDIAN has given great prominence this week to the state of affairs in Italy. On Tuesday it published a disquieting leading article expressing grave doubt as to whether any real plot

against Mussolini's life had been discovered and suggesting that the whole incident might have been invented to facilitate a further attack on Italian liberty. On subsequent days, our contemporary has been warning its readers that the two independent newspapers which remain in Italy, the STAMPA and the CORRIERE DELLA SERA, are about to be suppressed. The CORRIERE has for some time refrained entirely from political criticism, but even this will not, it is said, save it from destruction, since the Matteotti trial is soon to open and no accurate report of the trial is desired. If this great newspaper is really to be crushed by the Fascist machine, every reputable journalist in the world will feel resentment. Mussolini, for all his autocracy at home, has shown himself curiously sensitive at times to foreign opinion. Is he prepared finally to antagonize the world's Press? In his own words, "this is not a threat, but a proud warning."

\* \* \*

Mr. Baldwin's reply to Mr. Macquisten's insolent letter about the Political Levy has at last been published. In substance it is merely a gentle snub to Mr. Macquisten. So important a matter as the administration of trade unions and the rights and duties of their members towards one another and the rest of the community cannot, said Mr. Baldwin, be adequately dealt with in a private member's Bill. "The principle of political liberty for every citizen is the first concern of our party, and we shall not for one moment forget it; but the Government must be trusted to deal with such an important matter at their own time and in their own way." This rebuke has been received with becoming meekness by Mr. Macquisten, who, after explaining at enormous length how he came to publish his former letter (but not how he came to write it), says that he is only proposing to lay his Bill on the table of the House "in the hope that it may evoke sufficient demonstration of support . . . to satisfy the Government . . . that they will have the country at their back in proceeding with their own measure." This is a distinct climb-down, but it would be rash to conclude that Mr. Baldwin's troubles with the Die-hards are at an end.

\* \* \*

In the House of Commons on Monday Mr. Baldwin definitely confirmed the statement that a Safeguarding measure is to be introduced before Christmas. The device of not publishing the verdicts of Board of Trade Committees until legislation is introduced to give effect to them does not seem to have been altogether successful, for one Unionist Member alleged that, in spite of this reticence, the fabric glove industry is being destroyed by anticipatory imports. The whole Safeguarding procedure is, indeed, open to criticism, as may be seen from an able pamphlet just published by the National Association of Merchants and Manufacturers, of 14, Mincing Lane. The writer of this pamphlet, Mr. E. G. Brunker, reviews the whole machinery of the Safeguarding Regulations and draws particular attention to the loophole through which the Lace Industry forced its way into the protected area. It is useful to be reminded when further protectionist legislation is under discussion that the conditions laid down in the Regulations need not all be fulfilled in order to secure a duty. Lace was not subject to abnormal competition, but nevertheless it is now protected. Meanwhile the Iron and Steel Industry is still awaiting its fate. Mr. Baldwin announces that the Civil Research Committee have not yet reached a decision; that is to say, they have not found any method by which Mr. Baldwin's pledge can be squared with protection for this industry.

## THE TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIETY

WE are glad that trade-unionism has been chosen as the subject of the November *questionnaire* in the National Liberal Inquiry scheme. The present drift of trade-unionism raises problems as to the relationship to the community of this tremendous and (in the strict and inoffensive sense of the term) irresponsible power, which are of profound importance, and which need far more serious and dispassionate discussion than they usually receive. This need is not supplied by the controversies that are current about the political levy and peaceful picketing. On the contrary, these wretched issues are an obstruction which must first be cleared out of the way. Everything that is worth saying about them can be said very shortly. It is unwise to stick pins into a formidable giant, whatever your attitude towards him, even if you think him a savage monster who ought to be exterminated. And the policy of the Macquisten school is simply the policy of sticking pins. The political power of Labour would not be noticeably impaired by recasting the law relating to the political levy so as to make it necessary to "contract in" rather than to "contract out." Nor would the industrial power of Labour be diminished, at any rate at the points where it is most dangerous, by any change in regard to peaceful picketing. We hope that Liberals will not allow themselves to dally with these foolish suggestions under the influence of reasonable misgivings as to the present trend of the trade union movement and the various dangers to society which it opens out.

The central problem raised by trade-unionism to-day is the menace of the general strike, or rather of the strike upon a scale big enough to imperil the life of the community. The majority of strikes still, of course, conform to the traditional pattern of a conflict between employers and employed, with the general public affected only indirectly and in a very slight degree. But there has been a growing tendency in modern times to enlarge the area of conflict; with every enlargement of the area, the mischief done is increased; and, in some important industries, the strike weapon has now assumed destructive potentialities so immense as to terrify all thoughtful people, including probably the majority of those who wield it. It is idle to complain of this development. Trade-unionists have learnt to rely on the threat to strike as the great instrument by which they can better their position, and it is only natural that they should seek to increase its efficacy in every possible way, by amalgamation, by sympathetic action, by alliances, and the rest. But it is equally idle to shirk the fact that a strike on the grand scale, such as that with which we were threatened last July, raises issues altogether different from those raised by the strikes of the Victorian era. The fact that the primary tactical purpose in strikes of the former class is to cause inconvenience to the public rather than losses to the employer is alone sufficient to render obsolete the nineteenth-century code of maxims and conventions. For example, the trade unions have cultivated a special abhorrence of "black-legging," with which a large section of middle-class opinion was disposed to sympathize. Black-legging, direct or indirect, was not "fair play," a decent man would have nothing to do with it; such views represented a very common attitude not so long ago. But it is quite impossible to maintain such an attitude in a stoppage which is designed to bring the whole life of the community to a standstill. It is equally impossible for the Government to maintain the attitude of detached impartiality,

which has become traditional in ordinary trade disputes. The primary duty of any Government, irrespectively of the merits of the dispute, must be to maintain the vital services which are threatened; and it is useless for Labour partisans to complain that any action taken for this purpose shows improper leanings towards the "capitalist" side.

If an attitude of neutrality is impossible for either the Government or the public, once a stoppage on a grand scale has actually occurred, the menace of such a stoppage cannot be regarded with the formal unconcern of punctilious correctitude. We cannot dispose of the matter by saying that the employers are usually as much to blame as the workers, that it is an essential part of freedom that a man should be able to decline work if he is dissatisfied with the terms offered, and that a strike is only the concerted application of this unimpeachable human right. Against society's right to self-preservation, such considerations are of no avail. The general strike—or any approximation to it—is far too formidable a weapon to be employed habitually as an instrument of bargaining in connection with the wage disputes that must necessarily occur from time to time. If it is used habitually in this manner, though this or that crisis may be averted, it seems inevitable that sooner or later a disastrous conflict will occur.

It would be profoundly disquieting that the trade unions should possess so vast a power to injure the community, even if we could feel confident that they would only use it with the utmost reluctance and the deepest sense of responsibility. In many of the trade union leaders this reluctance and sense of responsibility are apparent enough; but it is equally apparent that there is a different spirit prominent in the trade union world, and it is far from clear which spirit will gain the upper hand at any critical juncture. There are men in positions of importance who hold extreme views, who would welcome rather than deplore an industrial upheaval, and who value trade-unionism chiefly as an instrument for "smashing up the capitalist system." There are many others who have little sympathy with these views, but who are very sensitive to their competition, and who seek to show that they are not behindhand in asserting the rights of Labour, by becoming extremely bellicose on the smallest provocation. The real point goes deeper than the rivalries of different types of leaders. Trade unionism is essentially a militant force; industrial belligerency is its main *raison d'être*; and it is therefore peculiarly liable to be dominated by a jingo mentality. It is difficult to suppose that a fundamentally militant spirit can be reconciled with exceptional restraint in the exercise of dangerous power.

To these considerations another must be added. Trade-unionism grew up during the last century in an environment of exceptionally rapid economic progress which was largely responsible for the marked advance in wages and the general improvement in the worker's lot commonly ascribed to trade-unionism itself. The economic environment is less favourable to-day, and is not likely to be as favourable as it was for many years to come. But the average worker still retains the assumptions of the pre-war era, taking for granted the feasibility of a steady advance in the standard of life, and disposed to think that he is the victim of a conspiracy if it is not forthcoming. This conflict between old assumptions and new tendencies points towards disillusionment—ultimately, no doubt, if bellicose methods are tried out, disillusionment with them, but meanwhile disillusionment with the results of compromise and moderation.



Altogether, we do not think that those Conservatives or Liberals exaggerate the danger, who regard the power and the temper of trade-unionism in our essential industries as a grave menace to society. Along what lines then should we look for protection? It is merely foolish, as we have said, to bait the trade unions by measures of the Macquisten type. It is utterly impracticable to attempt to draw their fangs by more heroic measures, which Mr. Macquisten and his friends do not even venture to suggest, such as re-enacting the Combination Laws or making strikes illegal. Wise statesmanship will look in a very different direction. Our aim must be not to diminish the power of trade-unionism, but to associate it with responsibility. We must try to harness to constructive and useful work the energy, the ardour, and the ambitions which at present find their main outlet in the conduct of disputes or the creation of discontent. Unfortunately it is far easier to define this aim in general terms than to suggest the detailed steps by which it should be pursued.

The claim is frequently made on behalf of the Parliamentary Labour movement that it serves in very much this way to ease industrial tension, or at least that it will do so when Labour at last wins an independent majority, and establishes its position as a party which frequently exercises the responsibilities of Government. Trade-unionists, it is argued, will look more to the Parliamentary and less to the industrial sphere for the satisfaction of their desires for radical social change; and, at all events when Labour is in power, will become anxious to abstain from action which might embarrass their party or discredit their movement. This claim is probably not altogether without substance. It is certainly desirable that trade union leaders should become Cabinet Ministers, and this may help, directly and indirectly, to diffuse a greater sense of responsibility throughout the trade-union movement. On the other hand, it may easily prove a serious weakness to a Government, confronted with an industrial emergency, that it should repose upon a party, the majority control of which is held by the trade unions in their corporate capacities. In any case, the prospects of the Labour Party, as it is now constituted, winning its independent majority are far more remote, in our judgment, than is generally realized. The association of trade union leaders with the work of Government would probably have gone further than it has by now if the Labour Party had never come into existence.

If the dangerous destructive powers of trade-unions are to be turned to constructive use, it is within the sphere of industry itself that the main solution must be sought. Somehow or other, Labour must be given a more responsible status in industry. Unfortunately, as we have said, it is extraordinarily difficult to devise any practicable plan by which general effect can be given to this principle. We must be content to apply it where we can, as occasion offers, in whatever manner seems best adapted to the particular problem with which we have to deal. But we hope that this consideration will be borne in mind in connection with what is after all the chief danger-spot of the industrial situation, the crisis in the coal-mines. The main problems with which the members of the Coal Commission have to wrestle are economic problems; and their proposals must be framed primarily with a view to providing a remedy for the economic difficulties of the industry. But it is vital that they should take account of the psychological problem too; that they should turn the difficulties of the situation to advantage by contriving that any new machinery that is set up gives a real measure of satisfaction to the vague aspirations prevalent among the miners for a say in the "control of the industry." It is in this spirit that the Liberal Party has addressed itself to our industrial problems in recent years. It is this spirit that inspired "Coal and Power," and the more general but less definite projects known as the "Industrial Policy," and we shall be wise to be faithful to this spirit in considering trade-unionism and the dangers which it undoubtedly presents to the safety of society.

## THE CRISIS IN FRANCE

TOURS, NOVEMBER 15TH, 1925.

THE financial proposals of the reconstructed Cabinet, in the form in which they were originally presented to the Finance Committee of the Chamber, made one wonder why it had been necessary to get rid of M. Caillaux. M. Caillaux was opposed to the capital levy. So was M. Painlevé. M. Caillaux proposed an "autonomous" sinking-fund. So did M. Painlevé. M. Caillaux refused to agree to the compulsory consolidation of the floating debt. So did M. Painlevé. Indeed, the new proposals differed from those of M. Caillaux chiefly in being less coherent. Where they had been altered, they had been altered for the worse, and the only novelty was the absurd poll tax of 20 francs a year, of which the Finance Committee made short work.

For a few days it looked as though another Ministerial crisis were imminent, for the proposals were received with almost universal disapproval. The faithful ERE NOUVELLE was their only friend in the Press, and all parties in Parliament objected to them for one reason or another. A crisis has been averted by a drastic modification of the scheme, but it is doubtful whether in its new form it will prove a solution of the French financial problem. The compromise arrived at is based on political rather than on financial considerations. The dominant preoccupation was to maintain, or rather restore, the unity of the Cartel des Gauches, which is in itself a perfectly laudable object, but the scheme which has resulted from the amalgam of the conflicting views of the Government and the four parties forming the Cartel is necessarily something of a patchwork, and seems neither to be based on any consistent principle nor to show an appreciation of the really important factors in the situation.

For my part, I cannot think that the French financial problem will be solved until the nature of that problem is better understood in France. All French parties are agreed on two points—that there must be no inflation by a further issue of banknotes, and that prices are too high and must be brought down. On these points the Socialists join hands with the TEMPS and the ECHO DE PARIS. The Socialists have refused to agree to a small issue of banknotes to repay the three-year Bonds falling due on December 8th, with the result that they are to be subjected to what is in fact a moratorium. Their holders have the choice of accepting in return Bons de la Défense Nationale at three, six, or twelve months, a security that can be used for paying taxes next year, or new three-year Bonds repayable on December 8th, 1928. That, at least, is what is now proposed. The TEMPS fulminates against any further issue of banknotes in any circumstances, but also objects to any alternative. The solution of the financial problem, according to the TEMPS, is very simple. All that is necessary is "a Government that governs with due regard for the national honour and in accordance with the fundamental principles of civilization and progress." This does not seem very helpful in a crisis like the present. There are many ways of applying the "fundamental principles of civilization and progress," whatever they may be, to questions of currency and finance.

What the TEMPS probably means is that, if confidence were restored, the holders of short-term Bonds would go on renewing them indefinitely and taking more. The pleasant financial method of the Bloc National—piling up Budget deficits and covering them by short-term loans—could then be renewed, and all



would be well. This is the note of the whole Opposition Press. M. Caillaux has destroyed confidence by telling the truth about the financial situation, or, as they put it, by libelling his predecessors, and by proposing to make the rich pay taxes, which is an attack on property. There is no financial crisis. The crisis is political and is due to lack of confidence. If only the Bloc National came back to power, the franc would soar, prices would go down, and everybody would be happy. These writers seem to forget that during M. Poincaré's premiership the franc on one occasion fell to its present value. But that, of course, was due to a malignant conspiracy against France and her flag, not to the financial methods of the Bloc National.

It is a pity that party feeling and self-interest should so blind people to facts. There has, indeed, been a certain revival of confidence during the last six months, but no amount of confidence could alter the situation created by the reckless financial policy of the last eleven years—for the primary cause of the present situation was the refusal to impose adequate taxation during the war. All parties are to blame to some extent for the situation. The Herriot Government did not, as they should have done, face the situation when they came into power, tell the country the truth about it, and at once try to put it right. Instead, they drifted until their own situation became impossible. Nevertheless, by far the greatest responsibility for the French financial crisis is that of the successive Governments that ruled France from 1914 to 1924, especially the Governments of the Bloc National. M. François-Marsal and M. de Lasteyrie, both of whom were Finance Ministers of the Bloc National, have been giving their opinions on the situation. They, of course, denounce inflation as ruinous, but what do they call the makeshifts into which they were driven by the policy of putting half the national expenditure into extraordinary and extra-extraordinary Budgets, with no revenue to balance it, and even then failing sometimes to balance the ordinary Budget? It is astonishing that anybody in his senses could suppose that such a system could be continued indefinitely. It is not the fault of the present Government that it has had to meet obligations that M. François-Marsal and M. de Lasteyrie bequeathed to their successors without making the smallest provision for meeting them.

All that the Opposition have to propose is more indirect taxation—although the indirect taxes are already about four-fifths of the whole national revenue—or the consolidation of the floating debt on ruinous terms. M. de Lasteyrie, for example, suggests that the holders of short-term Bonds should be offered a loan at 6 per cent., free not only from income tax, but also from death duties up to a certain amount. In the *TEMPS* on November 12th, Professor Jean-Louis Faure proposed a tax of 5 per cent. on all purchases of every kind, except those of wheat and bread, to be paid by the purchaser and levied by a stamp affixed to the invoice, the article itself, or the paper in which it was wrapped. This proposal, which would increase the complications of life, the Professor declared to be inspired by the "elementary truth" that people should be taxed on what they spend, not on what they earn—a most comfortable truth for the wealthy miser. It would be quite easy, Professor Faure thought, even for a workman earning £1 a week to pay such a tax, especially since it would lead to the restoration of the franc and, therefore, a reduction of the cost of living and general prosperity.

It is amazing that a professor should imagine that it is possible to restore the franc to par, as he apparently believes. This delusion is, however, almost universal in

France, although the experience of the stabilization of the mark should have shown its absurdity. After the stabilization of the mark and the return to the gold standard retail prices rose in Germany about 400 per cent. in a few weeks. Naturally, the rise would be far smaller in France, where gold prices have not fallen to the German level, but there would inevitably be a rise. Moreover, it is desirable that there should be. The franc is now worth about 21 centimes, the general wholesale index number for October was 584 and the index of retail prices in Paris 433. This abnormal state of things can hardly continue indefinitely, but nobody here seems to recognize even that retail prices are low. The *TEMPS* said last Sunday that the "profound causes" of the present trouble were the depreciation of the franc and the rise in prices. Socialists and Communists talk in much the same way. As I have said, all parties are agreed that prices must be reduced, that is to say, they are agreed on the impossible. This and the belief that the franc can be restored to par are the root fallacies that vitiate their point of view.

Nobody, to my knowledge, has suggested that perhaps the first thing to do is to stabilize the franc and return to the gold standard, not, of course, to attempt to bring the franc back to par, but to stabilize it at its present value, or some convenient approximate value, say, 20 centimes. I can see no reason why this should not be done. It would be much more easy than was the stabilization of the mark in November, 1923, but, of course, it would involve unpleasant consequences for a time. When, however, a surgical operation is necessary, the sooner it is performed the better. It might be desirable to issue a new transitional currency to a fixed amount for internal use only, on the lines of the German Rentenmark, which for a time could be used side by side with the existing currency and be interchangeable with it at the rate of one new franc for five old ones. This would, of course, be a limited internal inflation, but nobody would know it in France, and probably such an inflation is necessary once and for all in present conditions.

One does not wish to be unduly pessimist, but with the best will in the world it is difficult to be optimist about the new financial scheme, because it does not begin at the beginning—with the stabilization of the currency. The experience of Germany and many other countries has shown that, until the currency is stabilized, schemes of financial restoration are vain. I doubt whether the "national contribution"—a sort of cross between a capital levy and an additional income tax—will yield the sums expected from it, for the method of collecting it leaves room for evasion in some cases. Moreover, this scheme touches only the problem of the floating debt. There remains that of the Budget. It is plain that there will be a Budget deficit this year, for up to the end of October the receipts were only about two-thirds of the estimated revenue for the year, and the yield of direct taxation was about ten per cent. less, even in paper francs, than in the corresponding period of 1924. Moreover, the operations in Morocco and Syria have to be paid for, and the situation in the latter country is very grave. It is not yet known what changes, if any, are to be made in M. Caillaux's Budget proposals for 1926, but will it ever be possible to balance the Budget until the franc is stabilized and the present abnormal conditions are brought to an end? It seems to me that in this matter the French are putting the cart before the horse.

It is not, of course, at all certain that the financial scheme of the Government and the Finance Committee of the Chamber will be accepted by the Senate without

great modifications. There is already violent opposition to it on the part of all the interests affected. The wealthy French bourgeoisie are once more exhibiting their sordid egoism and lack of public spirit. As M. Romier has told them in the *FIGARO*, they would be wiser to criticize the Government scheme on the ground that, in their opinion, it will be ineffective, than to talk about "confiscation" and refuse to make any sacrifices. The root cause of the present financial situation is the persistent refusal of the wealthy classes and the agriculturists in France to bear their fair share of financial burdens. Had they consented to do that in the past, it would not be necessary to call upon them for special sacrifices now.

Although the unity of the Cartel is restored on the financial question, it may again be broken on the questions of Morocco and Syria. The unexpected decision of the Socialist National Council to refuse confidence to the reconstructed Painlevé Cabinet was due to the opposition of the majority—particularly the provincial delegates—to the Moroccan and Syrian policies. They want peace with Abd-el-Krim and the abandonment of the Syrian mandate. It will hardly be possible for the Socialists in the Chamber to vote the Moroccan and Syrian credits, and, if they vote against them, the Government will depend for a majority on the support of the Opposition.

ROBERT DELL.

## THE ALLIES AND THE FORMER GERMAN COLONIES

By LIEUT.-COMMANDER THE HON. J. M. KENWORTHY, R.N., M.P.

FOR some six months a lively discussion has been running in the German Press on the possibility of Germany receiving a mandate from the League of Nations, should she join that body, for one or more of her former colonies. There is a demand for this from sections of all parties in Germany, and especially from a section of the Nationalists, who feel very acutely the supposed slur on Germany in being deprived of her colonies.

Since Locarno there has been a certain amount of discussion in France and Italy on the same subject. It is being freely stated that important discussions took place at the Locarno Conference on this very matter, and it is even said that Germany was led to understand that the Allies were prepared to give sympathetic consideration to her claim before the Council of the League of Nations.

As this subject is likely to become acute in the near future, it might be as well to examine the pros and cons.

In theory Germany was deprived of her colonies after the war not because the Allies wanted them, for, as they continually stated, they wished not a foot of German territory, and supported President Wilson in his policy of no annexations other than in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants; but because, as they then stated, Germany had rendered herself unfit to have the care of backward and primitive peoples. Presumably not even the most brazen-faced Diehards in France or England would dare to advance that reason to-day after recent events, especially in Damascus. And the French might well retort with a citation of the laws for compulsory labour in British East Africa. The argument of Germany's depravity in her colonial prac-

tice has gone the way of most propaganda of the war period.

There have been black chapters in the dealings of all European Powers with their colonial territories. In any case, the mandate system is supposed to prevent abuses and oppressions, and should finally dispose of that argument against the return of any of her former colonial territories to Germany as a Mandatory Power.

A more valid, though perhaps at the time not so powerful, argument used by the British to cover the thinly disguised annexation was that Germany could not be trusted in the future with potential oversea naval bases, from which, presumably, her submarines would issue in some future naval war for the destruction of the world's merchant shipping. This argument no longer holds good, as Germany is forbidden to build or possess submarines, and her navy is strictly limited to the most essential needs of coastal defence at home. The naval strategical argument may therefore be placed on the shelf, together with the argument of Germany's moral delinquencies in Africa and elsewhere.

The most powerful reason against the transfer of a mandate to Germany is that all her former territories are under mandates of England, France, Belgium, Japan, or the British Dominions. It would be difficult to force the present Mandatory Powers to disgorge territory so firmly in their possession. This last is a substantial argument that we may expect to be advanced; and, being founded on human greed and selfishness, will be the most potent in the Council Chamber.

Now, what are the reasons that might be advanced in favour of the transfer of a mandate to Germany? In the first place, it would really designate Germany as once more fitted to enter the community of nations. It would raise her again to the same moral level as Portugal. If it is really desired to attach Germany to the Western Group of European Powers and to detach her from the Eastern Group—in other words, from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—no more astute move could be made. From the point of view of encouraging Germany to keep the peace and to carry out to the best of her endeavours the Dawes scheme, or the successors to the Dawes scheme, there could be no higher act of statesmanship. After all, there are hundreds of thousands of young Germans of the professional and pioneering class with no outlet abroad except through becoming citizens of another nation. If the French, in particular, were wise, they would take a leaf out of the book of the first Prince Bismarck, who, after the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War, deliberately encouraged the colonial extension of his late enemy in order to distract her attention from the soreness of defeat. Such an action to-day would take a good deal of the wind out of the sails of the Nationalist Party in Germany.

If the principle of the granting of a mandate to Germany is accepted, it is necessary to examine what territories might be made over to her care. It is hardly likely that any of the Powers concerned could be persuaded to surrender mandates for territories not former German colonies. The possible exception is the British mandate over Iraq, but no German statesman in his senses could be persuaded to take it. France could not surrender her mandate over Syria without a terrible loss of prestige. Nor can any of the Powers be expected to surrender mandates for their own colonies.

Remain the ex-German colonies. German South-West Africa is now a portion of the Union of South Africa. It would be unreasonable to expect the South African Government to return these territories. In

any case, they are unsuitable for European settlement, and were run at a dead loss before the war. It was calculated by critics of the German administration that it would be cheaper to bring the German farmers home from South Africa and settle them in the suburbs of Berlin on a yearly pension of £500 each. There are diamond mines in the territory, but it is usually understood that De Beers pay a substantial sum annually to prevent their being opened up. The only exports of any importance from German "South-West" were empty beer bottles.

The German Pacific Colonies are unsuitable for white settlers. German New Guinea is a plantation colony under the mandate of Great Britain, as also is Samoa under mandate to New Zealand. The Marshall Islands, the Caroline Islands, and other small possessions would be of no interest to the Germans themselves. Togoland is a paying proposition as a plantation colony, and German estate owners and merchants did well there before the war. It is now divided between England and France, and is apparently the one most favoured in those Allied circles which advocate the granting of a mandate to Germany. But the Germans are not very enthusiastic about it themselves. The Cameroons is large in area, and also a paying proposition—the greater part being under French mandate and the smaller portion being under British mandate. There would be difficulties with France, and presumably with Britain also. But the Cameroons might be very suitable for the purpose in view.

By far the most suitable territory from the German point of view is the former German colony of East Africa, now known as Tanganyika. With the exception of small territories ceded to Belgium, the greater part is under British mandate, and has been fairly closely settled by British estate holders. There are, therefore, strong vested interests to overcome. A solution might be found by the surrender of part of the Cameroons by France and part of Tanganyika by Britain, compensation being given in the part not surrendered to French and British nationals who had taken up property as *bona-fide* colonists or plantation owners. The cession of the whole or part of "German East" would be very popular in Germany.

There are statesmanlike alternatives to the granting of a mandate at all to Germany. One is the deliberate and official encouragement of German settlers in certain of the British Dominions. The German Government would have to recognize the loss of these nationals in a few years, but that is the case with the Germans who go to the United States, Brazil, and the Argentine at the present time. It is believed that the South African Government would be favourable to this, as there is alarm at the loss of balance between the coloured and white populations in the Union. Australia, of course, has a great need of inhabitants, but is far distant, and most of the territories still unsettled require great capital expenditure on irrigation works, roads, railways, &c. The Western States of Canada would be ideal for this purpose, although the feeling against Germans in Canada still remains strong, and war hatreds have died away more slowly than in the Mother Country. A scheme was actually proposed before the war by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, when Prime Minister of Canada, and reached an advanced stage of discussion with the German authorities, whereby communities of German settlers could be established in the Western Prairie lands. They would have been looked upon as a preventive to the flood of American immigration into Canada then alarming the Imperial Party in the Dominion. Just as the French in the Eastern Pro-

vinces have assisted the differentiation of Canada from the United States, so it was felt that strong communities of former Germans would play the same rôle in the Western States. Much the same considerations might be advanced to-day, though strange things have happened since the original project was discussed in the piping days of peace. There are many Germans forming minorities in Poland to-day, and, to a lesser extent, in Czechoslovakia, who would jump at the chance. Nor would they be the ordinary type of emigrant, but men possessed of capital, skill, and experience, and an asset to any of the Dominions once we had recovered from war-time prejudice. But whether the Allies take a long view to-day or not, there will be a demand in the future, and a demand with more justice than before the war, for "a place in the sun" for a great people who cannot be destroyed, and with whom Europe and the world have somehow to live.

### "CAPITALISM" AND WAR

(FROM A CITY CORRESPONDENT.)

THE letter from the Chairman of Lloyd's advocating the abolition of submarines may incidentally direct attention to the charge frequently made by some publicists that financiers and business men are base enough to favour war in the belief that they may secure some profit from the sufferings and needs of their fellow-countrymen. This charge is utterly devoid of truth, and my recollection is that in the years preceding 1914 there was a widespread uneasiness in the City, and a belief that European war was the one factor which might vitiate every forecast of the future. In October, 1914, I sent to a friend a record of my own experience of the outbreak of war and of the three agitated months which succeeded. As a brief statement of impressions it may perhaps be of interest.

"On July 28th Austria declared war on Serbia. We have a standing arrangement with our bankers that they discount at Bank rate our customers' acceptances endorsed by us. On the 29th I took £17,000 (maturing within three weeks) worth to our bankers, who after some demur agreed to discount them on the terms that if the Bank raised the rate next day we were to pay half the rise. The Bank rate was 3 per cent.

"On the 30th the Bank rate was raised to 4 per cent. and I took another batch, but found my banker in a state of great agitation, unwilling to look at any bills, stating that the crisis was developing badly and that in twenty-four hours we should hear of serious developments. I then took the bills to another big bank where we have an account, but here I found so much agitation that I simply retired without mentioning my business.

"On the 31st the Stock Exchange closed and my banker told me a moratorium would be enacted and £1 notes issued. There was an absurd demand for gold for hoarding purposes and my bank's store was seriously depleted.

"August 1st was the Saturday preceding Bank holiday, and in the ordinary course of business Lloyd's and the Stock Exchange were closed till Tuesday.

"August 4th banks remained closed. Stock Exchange was closed. A day of great agitation and war declared at midnight.

"Banks reopened August 7th. My banker told me he could not forecast developments. He said the Banking system of the whole country was insolvent. The Treasury was supporting the banks, and the whole structure now rested on Government credit. He said that all the big financial houses had returned their bills, and that the foreign bills returned were so numerous that with all the London notaries working at them it was physically impossible to 'note' them.

"He attributed the collapse to the entire cessation of foreign remittances. He said that he could not guarantee we should be allowed to draw against our own balance!



"You are aware that my business is insurance. I told my banker that it seemed to me fatal to anything like public confidence if insurers pleaded the moratorium. He replied that if a great community like Lloyd's did not use the moratorium the bankers might have to compel them to do so. Eventually on his suggestion I wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; whether the letter had any effect I know not, but in fact we never had a cheque returned and we never pleaded moratorium.

"August 13th. The Government announced a great scheme under which the Bank of England would discount approved bills, the State guaranteeing the Bank against loss.

"August 17th. I had an interview with a great authority who said that the problem of the money market presents enormous difficulties. There are 350 millions of bills held over. Consequently the great financial houses are insolvent and will accept no new bills. The relief given by the Bank of England merely defers but does not destroy liabilities.

"What does all this mean? It means the greatest financial collapse in history. But it has been disguised and to some extent corrected by the State calmly assuming universal liability! If the City had been left to itself the chaos would have been indescribable. But international trade has had a tremendous shock. And at the present moment the whole commercial system is artificial. No expedient has been found which will enable the Stock Exchange to reopen, and I am informed that the primary difficulty is to liquidate some £80 millions in the shape of Stock Exchange loans.

"In the meantime, who knows whether he is solvent? Take Lloyd's and the Insurance Companies. Their liabilities are at par; what price their assets?

"Now it is to be noted that these cheerful results were all brought about before a shot had been fired.

"But I pass on to a few other matters which have come under my notice.

"1. Notwithstanding the depredation of a few German cruisers our overseas commerce has not been largely interfered with. But the diminution of such commerce from economic disturbance is enormous. It is believed that 800 British steamers have been chartered by Government, and yet the remainder are far more than ample for the trade, and this notwithstanding the withdrawal of the great German mercantile marine! (Large chartering by the Russian Government must also be remembered.)

"2. Enormous inconvenience and loss is occasioned to British merchants and bankers through the activities of our own fleet. Property of British subjects to the value of several millions is in German vessels, which vessels are huddled into neutral ports for fear of capture. Immense difficulty is experienced in getting possession of this cargo, although our Government has authorized payment of freight and charges to the Germans.

"3. British steamers in time of peace carry many cargoes from foreign ports to the Elbe and the Weser; this trade has gone.

"4. During our long peace the shipping and insurance interests of England and the Continent built up a great international system supported by international conferences. Our insurance companies had reinsurance arrangements with the Continent and especially with Germany. Our companies did a large business through agencies in Germany and Austria, which countries also did business here in a lesser degree. Now all is chaos. How long will it take for business men to re-establish the structure rudely kicked over by the militarists?

"5. The exchanges have been upset—and this affects belligerent and non-belligerent alike. The effect of this is that shipowners sometimes have to receive their freight in coin and are much perplexed by the hazard of carrying it about. Another effect is that British subjects are opening banking accounts abroad—to save ruinous remittances. We ourselves have opened a bank account in New York.

"6. Facilities for remitting money are seriously curtailed (but are recovering gradually). In the case of a steamer in trouble on the West Coast of South America the guarantee of a British Bank was refused on the ground of belligerency. The steamer was delayed owing to financial difficulties.

"7. Everything seems to point to the absolute necessity of peace as a condition precedent to prosperity. The closing of great ports like Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp, and in some degree Rotterdam spells disaster to the British. Capturing German trade may be

a temporary mitigation, but the best remedy for British depression would undoubtedly be the re-establishment of German prosperity. Even if it were possible in some degree to capture German trade it is pretty certain there would be a corresponding loss in some other direction—because if the activities of 65 millions were really diminished, their own foreign demand would be restricted, whilst if those activities were maintained the trade lost in one direction would be made up by 'captures' in other directions.

"One odd fact is that Germany is the sole market for Indian-grown cotton (the worst quality grown).

"The financial position being what it is, why is it that the population is as well as it is? It must be premised that in some trades, *e.g.*, cotton and potteries, things are bad, and in the case of cotton will be worse. But the fact that we are jogging along fairly well is, I submit, due (1) to the keeping open of our sea routes to a degree altogether unexpected, so that there is no lack of raw material or of food, and (2) to the enormous activities of Government and its immense claim on the labours of the community. The Government is enabling production to go on and is keeping the people employed and also feeding them. This means an enormous increase of the national debt and mortgaging the future in order to prevent collapse of credit in the present."

These were my impressions of what was happening to the business world in 1914. To-day, in the light of after-knowledge, we should describe the situation in different terms, but the foregoing notes do at any rate genuinely reflect the reactions of the wicked capitalists of London to the prospect of enriching themselves by war.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Locarno debate was, as an occasion, less remarkable than any impressive European debate in the Commons during the past half-dozen years. The opening speeches were far too long. Mr. Chamberlain, for all his admirable temper, would have done much better if he had compressed his first thirty minutes into fifteen. Mr. MacDonald, who had a very difficult job, must have recalled with longing the Asquithian power—never displayed by any Front Bencher nowadays—of packing the Opposition case into twenty minutes. I note a few serious points. The Conservatives reveal more and more their indifference or hostility to the League of Nations. Labour opinion on the Pact, and on European commitments generally, is a decidedly awkward matter for the party leaders. The references, from both sides of the House, to the Dominions and foreign policy were most significant. Since the sensation of Chanak in 1922, the question of the Dominions and decisions on war and peace has been a standing challenge in the British system. Locarno is a portent. A Chamberlain has broken the united Imperial Front

\* \* \*

There is, evidently, to be no explanation from the Foreign Office in the matter of Mr. Rakovskv's farewell. We must assume merely bad manners: but not, I trust, an indication of the New Style, since neither Mr. Baldwin nor Mr. Chamberlain can be accused on this score. It is doubtless correct that the Foreign Office has no part in the national-day celebrations at the Embassies. And yet, as the representatives of other Powers attended the Russian reception on the 14th, there would seem to be good reason for amending the rule. The omission at the railway station on the day of the Russian Ambassador's departure cannot be excused. The Letters of Walter Page are, I believe, honoured as a classic in the Foreign Office. The Under-Secretary should see to it that the many passages on international courtesy to be found therein are read and marked by all his seniors.

If ever an Ambassador earned thanks and honour from the British Government and people, Lord D'Abernon has done so by his five years' service in Germany. In 1920, when he began, there was literally no more difficult office in the gift of the Crown than the Berlin Embassy. Lord D'Abernon addressed himself to its tasks in the finest spirit of the diplomatic profession, and he may have the deep satisfaction of knowing that his work will stand for years. Amid the confused play of forces surrounding the German financial collapse, the Ruhr occupation, and the Dawes agreement, Lord D'Abernon kept his temper and a straight course, and thereby placed the whole of Europe in his debt. On the social side also he has done brilliantly: making the British Embassy the cultural centre of a reviving Europe, and offering a cordial welcome to the leaders of thought and the arts in Germany. Nor is it inappropriate at this moment to recall that Mrs. Asquith in her Autobiography named Lord D'Abernon and Wilfrid Blunt as in presence the two finest specimens of English manhood she has known.

The Chairman of Lloyds' has done a service to the world by renewing the appeal for a ban on the submarine as a weapon. Note, however, the attitude of the governing groups in America. At the Peace Conference Britain took the first step. In 1921 at the Washington Conference abolition was formally moved by Lord Lee, who made the historic statement that the British Government "was prepared to scrap the whole of this great fleet and disband the personnel." The world knows what happened. M. Briand, on behalf of his Government, not only declined to entertain the proposal, but demanded an increase of the French quota from 60,000 to 90,000 tons. No secret was made in Washington of the consternation caused by the French stand and M. Briand's speech. Two years afterwards a leading member of President Harding's Cabinet confessed to me the bitter disappointment to himself and his colleagues. But here is the point: American public opinion four years ago was favourable to Disarmament—in general. Battleships are large and familiar objects. It was easy enough to get popular support for the ratio of capital ships. But the submarine—deadliest of all engines of war in our eyes—meant nothing to the American public. The British offer made no stir: it was ten years ahead of American time. Hence, if the subject is mentioned to-day to Mr. Wilbur, Secretary of the Navy in the Coolidge Cabinet, he invites us to admire his submarine-builing programme.

There seems to be a misgiving in some quarters as to the writing of Lord Curzon's Life. I am sure there need be none. Lord Ronaldshay can be relied upon to do it well. He knows the House of Commons, has been Governor of Bengal, and is the author of three books on India which show unusual literary competence and a fine understanding. It is the question of size and scope that is most important. Nothing, of course, can save us from two big volumes in the case of a public man of Curzon's standing. Mr. Clement Shorter suggests that the better way is one volume of biography and one of letters, but no Curzon could be fitted into any such scheme. He was an extraordinarily prolific penman. I should be greatly surprised if, in addition to the Life, we do not get several volumes of correspondence. Curzon gloried equally in letters, speeches, and dispatches, and he wrote them all in his large round hand.

Mr. Bernard Shaw, I observe, is to wind up a series of six lectures, by widely different speakers, on Free-

dom in Society, with an address in which he will ask, "Is Freedom Possible?" It is a curious circumstance that no important Englishman should ever have written a modern treatise on the renowned freedom of the English people. From the day of Voltaire to the day of Tolstoy's daughter, visitors from the Continent have hymned it. From Americans coming among us since the War we have had the repeated acknowledgment that the freedom we enjoy is unknown in the United States. But what, actually, and where, is it? I am not, at the moment, referring to Fascist van-drivers or the trial of Communists; I am thinking of permanent social facts. What is the freedom of the English villager? Ask the Liberal or Labour candidate in a rural constituency what happens at his meetings. What is the freedom of the citizen in a country town? Try the experiment of offering a Liberal or Labour poster to the shopkeepers in any High Street. Or invite the workman, in any closely industrialized district, to enlarge upon the theme of freedom and the trade unions. But England all the same is, relatively, a paradise of freedom.

Invitation: "Mr. Epstein's work in Kensington Gardens is so far from being the object of admiration that were not the English a tolerant people, it would long ago have been broken in pieces."—MORNING POST, October 7th.

Response: "The inevitable has happened to Mr. Epstein's Rima. She has been ingloriously daubed with green paint."—MORNING POST, November 14th.

Satisfaction: "It is clear that there is some quality in the memorial in Hyde Park which revolts the public. . . . The sentiment has already found expression in the youthful, foolish, and rather hooligan dose of green paint."—MORNING POST, November 18th.

You will agree, I think, that the latest protest against poor Rima, signed by fifteen veterans, was fittingly sent to the daily which issued the invitation, rather than to the TIMES. The P.R.A., Sir E. Ray Lankester, Mr. John Collier, Sir Bernard Partridge, and the rest know where to turn for relief from a "piece of artistic anarchy." But these guardians of order say not a word about the anarchy of green paint.

"The play's the thing," said Hamlet on a certain occasion: an assertion which has often been quoted, but one to which, as a generic proposition, very little attention has been paid."

Thus Mr. John Palmer, an experienced writer on the drama, beginning an article in the FORTNIGHTLY. And thus, I suppose, the passage will continue to be misapplied week by week in the SPHERE, by that excellent critic, Mr. Herbert Farjeon. Hamlet did not say the play was the Thing. He needed a particular play for a particular moral purpose, and his creator, needing the convenient couplet to mark the end of a scene, made the pause which produced the least excusable quotation in English.

No incident of the week is more diverting than the demand of the Council of the Metropolitan Conservative Associations for an orthodox daily paper, "within the purchasing power of, and of a suitable size for, the working classes." Perhaps Sir Frederick Hall and Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan and their associates would like to have the paper written more or less in the style of their resolution? I can promise them that its competition would rejoice their arch-enemies, Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook. "A suitable size for the working classes" is the happiest touch. The STAR, the MIRROR, and Lord Riddell's Sunday fertilizer seem to prove that Demos does not worry about the sheet.

KAPPA.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## THE PASSING OF THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

SIR,—I have just paid a last Sunday morning visit to the Foundling Hospital. It is in Guilford Street, Bloomsbury, as you know, and has stood, just as it stands now, the best part of two hundred years. It has to go. There is no doubt about that. The Governors have sold the estate for the handsome sum of £1,650,000 and, according to my information, the institution will have been transferred to the country before this time next year. So went Charterhouse School and Christ's Hospital, and so would go many of the City churches if some iconoclasts had their way.

I feel that this is an important matter. Can London afford to part with these things? Or, perhaps one should ask, what will London be when all of them have been taken from us? I like to think of a great city as having an individuality—a soul, if you like—of its own. Our old London possesses a very marked individuality. There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world. Other cities are finer, I daresay; have wider and more airy thoroughfares; dispose their public buildings, perhaps, to better advantage. But they do not compete with our London—the only big town in the modern world where anybody desires permanently to reside. And this is not because London outshines other cities in the use of costly building materials: in that respect they can and do go better than London even in many of the new cities of the new worlds. It is because of the history and traditions of London, and because in the older parts of the town you can still find at every turn buildings and places that enshrine its history and its traditions. And when we remember this we must not forget that London is the headquarters city of the English-speaking race.

Well, sir, on the Sunday morning to which I refer I made for the entrance of the Foundling Hospital. I was glad to find the statue of honest Thomas Coram, the founder, still *in situ*. (It is among the few decent outdoor effigies in London.) The porter at the gate saluted my top-hat respectfully. As I joined the thin procession making over the cobble-stones for the Chapel I did not fail to admire the quaint cloistral arcades that enclose the wide expanse of grass, and the trees, on either hand. The main buildings are, as the Chapel was described in an early record, "commodious, plain, and substantial." Very likely they will put up grander buildings in the country. It could easily be done. But it would be beyond the genius even of a Lutyens to recapture any part of the spirit of the Foundling Hospital if once it were disembodied. This spirit—eighteenth century, Georgian, whatever you will—is as impossible of revival in the twentieth century as the modes and manners of those times.

The Chapel is, if possible, more Georgian than anything else belonging to this remarkable foundation. It is not Gothic and I do not know that you would call it Palladian. It is arranged like a college chapel and has galleries and closed narrow pews with doors to them, and there are people's coats of arms in the windows. There is a tall reading-desk with a seat for the clerk just below, and a much taller pulpit side by side with it. But the glory of the Chapel is the great high gallery where the foundlings sit in tiers up and up to the roof on either side of the organ, the girls on one side and the boys on the other. There is no more delightful spectacle in London than the foundlings, two hundred and fifty or so of them, thus assembled in their Chapel on a Sunday morning. How lustily they sing in their innocent trebles! They remind me of the flights (would you call them?) of cherubim that you see in some of the pictures of the old masters. Only that these cherubs do not wear wings. The boys are angelic in Eton collars of shining purity, and the girls wear aprons and high linen caps. These waifs and strays of our imperial race! They are nobody's children. Yet it is possible from one's seat far below on the floor of the Chapel to regard them without emotion. They are so fresh and wholesome; so unconscious of their past, so unapprehensive of their future. In former days the officers of the Hospital were enjoined to remind the children often "of the lowliness of their condition, that they might early imbibe the principles of humility and gratitude to their benefactors." The rule is no longer observed. At least, I am sure that the present

good Chaplain does not regard it as his duty to awaken the foundlings to a realization of the differences of status and condition between them and the uninstitutional children who have mothers and fathers of their own. We have so largely changed our attitude to children, whether foundlings or otherwise, since those days.

Humility, indeed, must be a virtue difficult to practise among the foundlings. Theirs is so splendid a foundation, easily challenging comparison with some of the public schools where our nobility and gentry are educated. The organ to which the children sing is Handel's organ. The great composer, a warm friend of the Hospital, often played on it. And there are musical scores in his own hand in the Board Room. In the range of offices of which the Board Room is the centre there are some very notable art treasures; Hogarth's "March to Finchley," for instance, and his portrait of Thomas Coram—as fine a portrait as ever was done in England. For Hogarth, like Handel, had a soft corner in his heart for the foundlings. I recall, too, a portrait of Handel by Kneller, a bust of him by Roubiliac, and a Reynolds portrait, gone a little pallid as, alas! so many of Reynolds's portraits do. The Board Room itself is said to be the most elegant apartment in London. I can well believe it. It has a beautiful ceiling in stucco relief, some good pieces of old furniture, and medallion pictures, in the wall-panels, of other hospitals and charitable institutions in London. One of them, that of the Charterhouse, is by Gainsborough.

All this, I say, has to go away from London. What a pity! What would be said, I wonder, if the people of Florence sold up their *Spedale degli Innocenti*, and removed it bag and baggage into the country? Yet, but for its Della Robbias, their *Spedale* does not compare in interest with our Foundling Hospital. What will Mr. Baedeker say, and those pilgrims from every part of the civilized world who toil conscientiously in the footsteps of Mr. Baedeker?

Is it merely that we are too careless or too busy, or because we are soulless, that we let our Foundling Hospital go out of London without a protest?—Yours, &c.,

CECIL HARMSWORTH.

## THE PURPOSE OF O.M.S.

SIR,—May I once more trespass for a short space? The "purpose" of O.M.S., on which you think I did not throw much light in my previous letter, is set forth as clearly as I can express it in the last sentence of the second paragraph: "to provide a classified register of those who will be willing to man the Government's organization for seeing that the necessary supplies and services for the country are forthcoming in the event of a general strike." Obviously, the function of O.M.S. is preliminary to that of the Government organization, just as the enrolment and training of the old Volunteer Force was preliminary to a possible call by the Government to help in the defence of our shores.

As to method, Committees are being formed in all large centres of population, and well-accredited people will be asked to register their names with these as willing to assist, and to state the services they are best qualified to render. That is all.—Yours, &c.,

C. WYKEHAM-FIENNES,  
Secretary-General.

70, St. Stephens House,  
Westminster, S.W.1.  
November 12th, 1925.

## LOCARNO

SIR,—Since my former letter on the Locarno Pact, I have had the benefit of reading explanations afforded by your own courteous footnote, and in speeches by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Chamberlain. These claim for it both a material and a moral value. *I.e.*, it adds to the difficulties of any Power that wishes to make war by its operation and it makes it less likely that any Power will wish to make war by its existence.

Your own statement of its material benefits may be summarized thus:—

1. The Pact does not make it easier for Germany to attack Poland.



2. If Germany did so, the "ordinary mechanism of the Covenant" would come into play.
3. Germany, in joining the League, "pledges herself" not to attack Poland.

As to the first of these, I can only reply that an arrangement which gets rid of such obstacles as the Occupation Armies and the Ambassadors' Conference—however futile these may be—does clearly make attack easier.

The remaining two safeguards mentioned by your note are the ordinary mechanism of the League and Germany's new pledge, which, it is suggested, will prevent war.

But how can this suggestion be reconciled with THE NATION's article of October 24th? There we read that, so far as Germany's wishes were concerned, "the possibility of war in the last resort (between her and Poland) must be left open."

We also read "the loophole for war as between Germany and her Eastern neighbours remains." One reads, too, of THE NATION's approval of this, and its explanation—that it is better "that Germany should confine herself to undertakings which she can sincerely give, and which will not be repudiated at the first strain."

Germany thus cannot "sincerely" give a pledge not to make war, i.e., to abide by arbitration even if arbitration goes against her. She comes into the League on special terms. The ordinary mechanism of the Covenant (if there were any—a point I shall venture to discuss with becoming brevity in a later paragraph) would not come into play against her. She would be under that "mechanism" as modified by the Pact. She would submit her quarrel with Poland to arbitration and thus fulfil the only obligation the Pact lays on her. But if the result were not satisfactory, "the possibility of war in the last resort" could be made an actuality.

No one can have it both ways. If it is a matter for "frank approval" that a loophole for war remains, it cannot, at the same moment, be a matter for rejoicing that "the ordinary mechanism of the Covenant" closes that loophole up.

But it would seem that there is no ordinary mechanism in existence. The League may declare that A has aggressed upon B, but who shall be the C, D, and E who shall come to B's assistance, nothing (Locarno apart) has yet decided. A nation may "commit an act of war against all other members of the League," but whether they or any of them shall take notice thereof is (Locarno again apart) for their individual decision.

One scheme for providing "mechanism" was vetoed by Persia, another by Britain. Yet another failed in the Geneva Protocol. The enthusiasm aroused by Locarno would appear to be due in part to the belief that at last some sort of mechanism, however partial, halting, and inadequate, has been found. My purpose in writing is to ask whether it is as worthless as it appears, and as your analysis of October 24th demonstrated. The only answers one can gain are that the mechanism now supplied treats war between Germany and Poland, after certain preliminaries, as a definite part of its operation. Such a war, obviously enough, may well draw in its train war with France, the latter's defeat, the recapture of the lost provinces, and possibly a German settlement on the shores of the Channel. Such is Locarno's guarantee of peace.

Poland's position under it would seem to be closely akin to that of Belgium in 1914. Several Powers were then bound by treaty "to preserve her territorial integrity"; a larger group was bound by the Hague Convention to "respect" it, and Germany was "pledged" to both. The value to Belgium of these arrangements was demonstrated in the next four years, when it was shown how much she could lose under them, and in the following seven, when it was shown how much of her losses she could recover after an ultimately successful vindication of her rights.

I pass now briefly to the other claim put forth. We must, we are told, look not to the mechanism, but to the spirit behind it. "Locarno," says Mr. Chamberlain, "is not an end, but a beginning." "It brings Germany into the League," says Mr. MacDonald, and that justifies a *Te Deum*. One must not assume, says your footnote, that because Germany has troubled the waters for the last fifty years she is going to do so for the next fifty. One would be very happy to rejoice in such good company. And certainly, if Germany

is now ready to accept the loss of Silesia and Posen, or to confine herself to such attempts to regain them as may be made by arbitration, the futility of the Locarno mechanism becomes less important. But again, what is the evidence of this? I asked for evidence—some evidence, any evidence—in my last letter. Your footnote, though it covered most other points, was silent on this one. I have read the speeches of the two statesmen. They are equally silent. What are the facts? Who knows them? What effort has been made to elicit them?

The one plain fact is that Germany has refused any arrangement which does not preserve her the right to attack Poland in her own time. Alongside this undoubted fact, one reads newspaper stories of preparations. These may not be facts. One reads such disquieting things as that Germany is rapidly drafting numbers of men into a Reserve by a method of short service, sanctified to her since the days of the post-Jena recovery; that the Ambassadors' Conference has objected to the existence of large quasi-military organizations, and that her commercial aviation and her commercial chemistry are so organized as to be important military assets. These things may be quite false, but if their falsity is to be made the basis of policy, it should be demonstrated with some cogency. When Germany, in joining the Pact—and with it the League—insists on her right to go to war, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the competent organizing minds who have stipulated for such a right, are preparing in some fashion to exert it.

In the meanwhile I must ask leave to express my individual alarm—not at a Pact, but at a Pact with loopholes.—Yours, &c.,

W. A. HOLMAN.

[We can only ask Mr. Holman to read again the article and the footnote to which he refers, between which there is no sort of inconsistency. The "loophole" for war is not closed up. But if Germany were to conduct her policy with the fixed intention of attacking Poland, she would, under the Locarno Agreement—to put it at the very lowest—be running much greater risks of united action against her, than if there were no such agreement. Surely, therefore, her adherence to these arrangements is some evidence of good faith.—ED., NATION.]

#### THE HEBRIDEAN DIALECT

SIR,—I am honoured indeed by Mr. Dobrée, in his review of the 14th inst., when he compares my plays, even to their detriment, with those of so great a master of the craft as Synge; and I am not likely to quarrel with his good opinion of my work as a whole. But on what is surely a question of fact rather than of opinion I must counter his statement that I use "almost the same idiom as Synge."

Curiously enough, my residence in the Hebrides (continuously, summer and winter, from 1902 to 1908) was practically contemporaneous with that of Synge in the Aran Islands (his first play being published in 1905). It follows, therefore, that my acquaintance with the Hebridean idiom was unlikely to be influenced by a writer with whose works I did not become acquainted until I had left the Hebrides; and that my use of idiom is unlikely to be derivative from him.

The affinities between the idiom of the Scottish, and that of the Irish, Gael are really only on the surface: each is strange and lovely and allusive to the wild life of the open; and if a critic is relying on memory he is apt to think them "almost the same." But let him take "The Playboy" in his hand, as I have done this morning, and compare the phrasing there with that of these plays of the Hebrides; and he will see that in reality the idiom of the Aran islanders has many more points of difference than of affinity with the idiom of the people of the Scottish isles whom I have attempted to depict in "The Glen is Mine" and "The Lifting."—Yours, &c.,

JOHN BRANDANE.

The Lake Hotel, Port of Menteith, West Perthshire.

[Mr. Dobrée writes: "I had no intention of suggesting that Mr. Brandane's idiom was derived from Synge. All I meant was that on reading his plays one is inevitably reminded of Synge. I have no doubt that to those familiar with them the two dialects are very different, but to the untrained ear they must appear to have more points of affinity than of difference."]

## CROSS CHANNEL SERVICES

SIR,—Those who perforce pay more than one penny a mile "supplement" to travel in the "boat" trains of the Southern Railway, which do not compare favourably with the ordinary rolling-stock of the other lines, may be interested in the following summary of the "improvements" for which they are paying:—

## CROSS-CHANNEL SERVICES DAILY.

		1899.		1925.	
Dover and Folkestone	to				
Calais and Boulogne	...	6		4	
Newhaven to Dieppe	...	2		2	
Dover to Ostend	...	3		2	
FARES.					
		First.	Second.	First.	Second.
London to Calais	...	30/2	21/7	46/3	33/2
" Boulogne	...	29/2	20/7	42/11	30/2
" Dieppe	...	24/7	17/7	42/0	31/0
" Ostend	...	28/2	19/10	42/3	29/6

This may be evidence of Progress, but I prefer to regard it as supporting the theory that Railway Companies go mad when they see the sea.—Yours, &c.,

D. SPRING RICE.

## PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS

SIR,—May I ask the hospitality of your columns in the cause of captive wild birds?

By an Act passed in May, 1925, it is now an offence punishable by a maximum fine of £25 and three months' imprisonment with hard labour:—

1. To capture, or attempt to capture, alive any wild bird by means of a live bird used as a decoy which is tethered or secured by braces or other similar appliances, or which is blind, maimed or injured.

2. To use bird-lime or any substance of a like nature for above purpose.

3. To keep or confine a bird in any cage or other receptacle of insufficient height, length, or breadth to permit the said bird to freely stretch its wings.

Your readers can greatly help to enforce this new Act by reporting all transgressions against it to Captain E. G. Fairholme, O.B.E., R.S.P.C.A., 105, Jermyn Street, S.W.1. (All communications treated as confidential.)

I shall be happy to send a leaflet explaining the Act to anyone who applies to me.—Yours, &c.,

MARGARET BRADISH.

95, Park Road, Chiswick, W.4.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

NATIONAL heroes and history seldom, if ever, put up their horses together, unless indeed the history be of that anecdotal nature, so highly commended by Dr. Johnson, that feeds upon tradition, and rests on hearsay. The less there is to be really known about a national hero, the firmer his pedestal. A national hero must manage to get himself riveted upon the fate of the nation that has taken him to her breast as her very own. Immediately successful he need not have been, but he must ever carry upon him that mystical "something" out of which symbols are constructed, for a national hero is above everything else a symbol.

William Wallace, that mysterious "wight," is a Scottish symbol; Nelson, though dangerously near a historical period, an English symbol; and Joan of Arc, a French symbol.

In these modern and unromantic days Kings and Queens and public characters are usually too much involved in dubious and well-documented affairs to have much chance of becoming national heroes or heroines. Their records are too full of disagreeable details to excite enthusiasm in the breasts of a united nation. It would be unreasonable, for example, to expect a good English Roman Catholic, however much of a Wembleyite, to rise in his place, raise his glass, and drink merrily to the toast, "The glorious and immortal memory of good Queen Bess." The blood of Campion and Father Walpole would rise in his gorge. And yet Elizabeth stands nearer than any of our monarchs to the national crown of glory.

Nor is it easy for the successful hero of a Civil War, or indeed of any war as now waged, to become a national hero. Oliver Cromwell was for some years the most successful and feared man in Europe, and when the great Protector died he was awarded the costliest of funerals, which was attended by the diplomatic representatives of the most powerful nations then in existence; yet "the late man who made himself to be called Protector" never had the least chance of becoming a national hero. Cromwell, though at one time a brewer, was not cast in an English mould, and, great as he was, was as much a "sectary" as Archbishop Laud.

Nor has the great Duke of Wellington, despite a certain unity of character that makes all his sayings as distinctive as Johnson's, ever touched to the pitch of hero worship the heart of the nation. It is, apparently, almost

impossible, in these latter days, to become a national hero.

These sombre and self-denying reflections, and others of an even more painful nature, have been forced upon us in consequence of reading, with eyes glued to the page, a recently published and lengthy life of Abraham Lincoln.\* Has Lincoln become an American national hero? If he has, it would, in these post-Plutarchian times, be a romantic thing. If "ups and downs" in the estimates of men go to the making of a national hero, Lincoln had enough of these to people a Valhalla. It is now more than sixty years since the present reviewer saw a shop-front in Liverpool smashed to bits, in order to let an angry mob tear in pieces a small and very ugly carte-de-visite of Lincoln, which a Dissenting tradesman had exhibited in his window; and about the same time the London TIMES had inquired in a leading article, "Is the name of Lincoln ultimately to be classed in the catalogue of murderers, wholesale assassins, and butchers of mankind?"

Nor was it only in England or in the rebel States that Lincoln was disliked and despised. The majority of his Cabinet colleagues never ceased to wonder how he got among them, or to do their best to secure the defeat at the next Presidential Election of the man they had nicknamed "the Gorilla." Lincoln never really came into his own until an assassin had struck him down. His Gettysburg speech, now of world-wide fame, fell as flat as a pancake, the honours of the day being universally awarded to Edward Everett, who, after demanding two months to prepare an oration, delivered one occupying either one hour and fifty-seven minutes or, as one auditor has testified, "a trifle over two hours." A trifle, indeed! This was the order of the proceedings. The ceremony took place in the open air, and was opened with music. Then an extempore prayer which, though addressed to Almighty God, was described as "eloquent"; then two hours of Edward Everett, followed by a dirge composed by a local bard, and sung; then a speech introducing the President, who had not long received an invitation to be present; then, and not till then—"picture it, think of it. Oh, sensitive man"—was Lincoln allowed to come forward, a tall, gaunt,

\* "The Life of Abraham Lincoln." By William E. Barton. Two vols. (Arrowsmith. 36s.)

unkempt, ill-dressed figure, with a thin, though far-carrying voice. He held his few notes in his hand and proceeded to read from them one of the shortest speeches ever delivered, containing only 267 words. When he suddenly sat down, to the amazement and perhaps to the relief of the crowd, his own feeling was that he had made a mess of it; and Mr. Everett declared himself disappointed. Mr. Barton in his second volume tells you all about this now famous speech—of which seven manuscript copies exist—how it was composed in Washington, revised in Gettysburg, and delivered as composed with but the interpolation of two words, "under God."

Mr. Barton's biography exposes itself with a quite childish simplicity to the ridicule of the careless reviewer. The greater part of the first of the two portly volumes narrates with an immense accumulation of detail the full particulars of Lincoln's parentage, and his upbringing in the Border States of Kentucky, where he was born in 1809; in Missouri, where he was bred, and in Illinois, where he lived until, in his fifty-fourth year, he went to Washington as President. In this part of his book Mr. Barton exhibits with reckless indifference some of the most trying faults of biographers—faults so painfully familiar to the well-worn readers of this kind of literature that it is unnecessary to name them. They are easily recognizable from afar. You see them coming, and it is your own fault if you do not skip them. Apart from these stains and blotches, Mr. Barton's life of Lincoln is, in our sober judgment, a masterpiece in its own genre. But however this may be, these two volumes should be hailed with delight by those students of manners and customs, and the deep mystery of man, who never can be told too much about anyone who is worth reading about at all. It would almost appear as if this biographer has left out nothing.

The story of Lincoln's *entourage*, as here detailed, is an amusing tale, almost ludicrously so. That a remarkable and original man should be bred in hardship and simplicity, and forced to struggle ere he can overcome the obstacles he found placed in his path to prominence, is what we are accustomed to discover in the biographies of heroes. To be born in a great house and educated at Christ Church are more serious obstacles in the way of originality and real distinction.

But Lincoln's early life as Mr. Barton describes it is unfamiliar, at all events, to the English reader. It was not like either Cobbett's or Carlyle's early life, and creates a sense of squalor and a vulgar kind of crudity from which you would have imagined no really distinguished man could have emerged.

Mr. Barton almost revels in his description of the religions amongst which Lincoln was raised—Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians. Lincoln's own piety was of the kind called "natural," and he was never anything of a sectary; but he spent his life among the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians of the Border States, and a queer set of religionists they were, rough and ready, very much alive, but not of the saintly type. There was nothing unusual in these surroundings—"Down South" there was the same atmosphere. When we were young we were led to believe that the Southern Army was a Cavalier army on the model of our King Charles's—composed of "gentlemen" and hard-swearers. Mr. Barton tells us that the Southern Army was at least as religious as Cromwell's Ironsides, being mainly composed of Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, and was attended by crowds of chaplains, who conducted services of "prayer and praise" on all suitable occasions. Fundamentalism was then the creed of America, and with the exceptions of a handful of Unitarians in the North, and

another handful of the followers of Tom Paine, all the combatants alike believed in the verbal inspiration of King James's version, and the authority of the Book of Genesis. Each side had, no doubt, its favourite texts, that of the Southern Army being "Cursed be Canaan."

To epitomize such a mass of accumulated detail into a column or two would be impossible, and even were it achievable, most misleading. Mr. Barton must be read at length or not at all. One or two facts explanatory of Lincoln's strange career may be stated. There are two crucial features in a man's life—his relations towards money, and with women. In the matter of money, Lincoln's record is very simple—he never had any money worth mentioning, and if, as sometimes happened in the course of his rugged, hard-up life, he borrowed any, he always repaid it. The Almighty Dollar, now supreme in his country, held no court in Lincoln's breast. In the matter of women—we can safely refer the reader to Mr. Barton's pages, where he will be told about Ann Rutledge, Mary Owens, and Mary Todd, and will soon come to the conclusion that Lincoln was no amorist. Once, when quite young, he lodged under one roof with eleven Miss Campbells and remained irresponsible to all their necessarily varied charms. Lincoln respected women, and hated to make any woman miserable. His marriage with Miss Todd, a former belle of Springfield, Illinois, was in no sense ideal—how far it was actively miserable, no one can now say—not even Mr. Barton.

Eventually, after many unsuccessful attempts to make his way in the world, Lincoln acquired in a job lot a damaged copy of Blackstone's "Commentaries," and taking to them, became a lawyer in the small town of Springfield. The nature of his practice, actions for slander, and prosecutions for assaults arising out of slanders, with an occasional murder or fugitive slave case, and the fees earned thereby, would make Sir John Simon shudder. Yet one way or another, Lincoln, though never a lawyer of eminence, acquired just as much of the legal mind as it is advantageous for any statesman to possess.

In his well-known public debates with Senator Douglas in 1858, which first attracted public attention to this hitherto obscure country lawyer, Lincoln showed that he knew how to conduct controversy with a formidable opponent of great reputation, skill, and cunning in a style that argued a trained mind and a native dignity.

Still, as you read on and on into this lengthy biography, you find yourself asking all the time, how on earth did this man win his first election at such a time as 1861? It is a question hard to answer. Once in the White House, it was found impossible to dislodge him, although desperate efforts, not shrinking from treachery, were made to do so. The second election, though a touch-and-go affair, is easy of explanation—not so the first.

It is, we think, quite plain that Lincoln almost from the beginning, in his uncouthest and laziest of days, was like Cæsar, ambitious. This is strange, for he reveals no taint of either vanity or conceit, and was, in truth, a humble-minded creature, often thought to be lacking in even a reasonable self-confidence. Yet when he came to compare himself with any of his competitors, he concluded that he was more likely to save the Union than any of them, and this conclusion it was that kept him going—

"through a cloud,  
Not of war only, but detractions rude."

Though born in a slave State, neither Lincoln nor his father before him ever owned a slave, nor does he ever seem in his line of life to have come across the



ancient institution of domestic slavery. He always detested it, but did not hold it in abhorrence, and if he could have saved the Union and left the "Institution" to die, as die it must have done, a natural death, Lincoln would have been content. It was this attitude of Lincoln's that made the fervent Abolitionists condemn him as a member of the Church of Laodicea, whilst others, witnessing the torrents of blood shed by Grant ere Lee was compelled to surrender, cursed him as a "Butcher of Mankind."

Looking back after all these years, and reading afresh Lincoln's speeches, it is impossible not to applaud the stability of his mind. He is entitled to the full benefit of the aphorism of the Son of Sirach—

"Be steadfast in thy understanding, and let thy words be the same."

Lincoln's death by assassination was the most romantic incident in his life.

His popularity in England only arose after a younger generation had discovered that he fought to maintain "the Union," and was thus thought to be an example to those who were opposing Home Rule for Ireland.

Has Lincoln become a national hero?

### SPORTSMEN

IF you look up your Oxford Dictionary you will find it gives two meanings to the word "sportsman": the first is a "person fond of sports"; the second and figurative meaning is a "person not afraid of taking the risk of failure." It is interesting in the light of recent events—such as the refusal of the Harlequins Rugby Football Club to play again with the Newport Athletic Club—to examine these meanings and, particularly, how the second meaning derived from the first.

It is obvious that a sportsman *might* be a man fond of sports; although not so obvious as it seems, for we do not consider a grocer as a man fond of groceries, or a lawyer as a man fond of laws, or a politician as a man fond of politics. In fact, it is taken for granted that ulterior, not to say nefarious, motives may be behind indulgence in these pursuits; but the sportsman is always supposed to have a pure heart and to kill birds and beasts—in the case of the less popular and therefore "lower" sports—and to kick, maul, or otherwise demoralize, and, occasionally, put out of action his rival "sportsmen"—in the higher forms of sport such as "soccer" and Rugby football—with that complacency which only a pure unalloyed love of doing these things can give. When the Newport Athletic Club presented every member of its team last year with a gold watch, its intention was no doubt to mark the increased love of sport which had been manifested in him during the year; and when Sir Henry Norris, chairman of the Arsenal Football Club, with Mr. William Hill, vice-chairman, and Mr. Herbert Chapman, manager, went to Scotland to see William Harper, Scotland's "superb goalkeeper," it was with the object of paying homage in some manner to the gigantic development of the love of sport in William Harper, and William Harper was so moved by their homage that he decided to leave Scotland and to join the "Arsenal"—presumably because there he would be able to love sport more than in Scotland, where, it is notorious, people love money almost as much as sport.

"Fond of sports" must be the correct meaning to assign to the word "sportsman" when applied to any of these gentlemen; the only alternative meaning the Oxford Dictionary allows us, "person not afraid of taking the risk of failure," clearly will not do, since the object of all these gold watches and of this homage-bearing visit to Scotland is to eliminate all risk of

failure. It is the one thing that the Newport Athletic Club and all similar bodies of "sportsmen" fear, for they cannot afford to fail, and their chairmen and managers are kept busily occupied *buying* success. Yet these people are called sportsmen, and the chronicle of their deeds and misdeeds, entitled "Sport," fills columns of our daily newspapers. Another fifty years of such "sport" and the term "sportsman" will have attained its last and final meaning as a term of abuse. To call a man a sportsman will be to use the lowest epithet that can be found in the language. But why should playing games for money—and to win rather than to play well—be considered so much worse than selling stocks and shares for money, or engaging in any other trade or profession for money? Because of the preliminary assumption that men love sport and "sport" from pure joy. No one imagines that a man is a grocer because he loves grocering; yet this may be a mistake, for has not Mr. Chesterton written of the grocer that:—

"He crams with cans of poisoned meat  
Poor subjects of the King,  
And when they die by thousands,  
Why, he laughs like anything?"

So another Mr. Chesterton might apostrophize the sportsman as Mr. Chesterton has the grocer:—

"The sportsman is a man whose sport  
Is winning all the time;  
The only risk he ever takes  
Is losing half a dime.

"For birds or beasts he has a gun—  
And great must be his skill;  
For otherwise they may escape,  
Though him they cannot kill.

"And if that clever business man  
Upon the football ground  
Can't kick his rival in the goal,  
Why, he kicks him on the ground."

But I think he would be thus as unfair to the sportsman as Mr. Chesterton has been to the grocer. The poor unfortunate sportsman is, through no fault of his own, sailing under false colours. He, like the grocer, "sports" for money, or because he loves it; but the public, under the guidance of its great idealists—the newspaper owners and the headmasters of schools—insists upon treating him as an artist, that is to say as a man who is always indifferent to money, reputation, and success, being entirely concentrated on doing his work as well as it can be done. And whereas a "sportsman" will come in time to mean a man who always succeeds, so "artist" will come to mean a man who always fails—for an artist can never be satisfied with his work, to him it always is less perfect than he hoped for and aimed at. A "sportsman," on the other hand, always succeeds because apparently it is the only way by which you can tell he is a sportsman. Nobody likes being branded in this cut-and-dried way, and, therefore, it will be surprising if there is not a revolt among "sportsmen" against the term, as there has been a revolt among artists against the word "artist." For example, in "Who's Who," Mr. Desmond MacCarthy describes himself as a journalist merely because the word carries no assumption of superiority or value. On his analogy I should not be surprised to learn that the finest Rugby player, the man who took most risks and who concentrated himself most upon playing the game—but not on "playing the game"—would describe himself simply as a footballer, leaving the designation "sportsman" to those who hired gangs of footballers to play for money and to the crowds who do their damndest to demoralize visiting teams and prevent their scoring.

Other candidates for the title of "sportsman" will not be wanting. A gamekeeper, for example, is not a "sportsman," neither is a caddy. But a man dressed up in "plus fours," with a large assortment of clubs, motoring to the golf links in a saloon car, is obviously one. For it is clear that he is taking no risks, not even the risk of a chill. The golf links are sure to be there, so are the caddies, and if he cannot hit the ball with one

club he can at least try half a dozen others. And if all fail there is a tea-house to retire to. Obviously if this is "sport," sport is bound to flourish, it is so exceedingly agreeable. But we secured the last thing in comfort when we succeeded in crowning our most successful amusements with a halo of moral superiority and virtue and became "sportsmen."

W. J. TURNER.

## MUSIC

### VAUGHAN WILLIAMS AND HOLST

TWO new works have already been produced during the present orchestral season which call for notice, namely, "Flos Campi" of Dr. Vaughan Williams and the "Choral Symphony" of Mr. Holst. The former was produced at the first Queen's Hall Symphony concert, the latter at the first Philharmonic concert.

"Flos Campi" consists of six short movements, and is written for a wordless chorus, viola solo, and small orchestra. Despite the quotations from the Song of Songs which are placed at the head of each section, the work gives the impression of being music of a very intimate and subjective order, devoid of any programmatic implications. On a single hearing one formed the conclusion that it probably represents the highest point to which its composer has yet attained, although, of course, it is always possible that greater familiarity may lead one to revise this judgment. In this work Vaughan Williams seems to have acquired a sureness of touch and a concision which had hitherto been lacking in his art, without thereby impairing the apparent spontaneity and effortless simplicity which have always characterized it. I say "apparent" advisedly, for it is well known that this composer works slowly, and that his music only receives final form after long hesitation and mature deliberation.

The peculiar and subtle appeal which this work makes is due not so much to any virtues of musicianship pure and simple as to a quality of mind which informs the whole. This quality has often been called sincerity, but this is hardly the right word, denoting as it does a somewhat negative virtue, possessed more often by mediocrities than by men of genius. We only call an artist sincere when we cannot think of anything else good to say about him. It is a kind of consolation prize given to the last in the race. Vaughan Williams is more than that, something more positive. Almost alone to-day, he is entirely without self-consciousness, and has the courage to write simply as he feels, without misgivings. He is not afraid to write the kind of music that anybody could have written, with the paradoxical result that he has evolved a more personal idiom than almost any other composer in this country. In this he reminds one of George Borrow, who often seems to write like a second-rate journalist, with precisely the same results.

Apart from Frederick Delius, who belongs to an older generation, it would be difficult to think of any work by an English composer which one could put above "Flos Campi," or even alongside of it. It is true that Vaughan Williams does not possess the same rich harmonic palette as the older master, and, generally speaking, his talent is a more restricted and a less robust one. It may not be great art, but still it is art, and that is much to be thankful for.

While Vaughan Williams has progressed steadily in each successive work since the "Sea Symphony," Holst presents the melancholy spectacle of a continuous and unrelieved decline; while the development of the former has been accompanied by an increasing independence of literary or pictorial conceptions and a corresponding decrease in his instrumental demands, the degeneration of the latter coincides with an increasing reliance upon a text or programme and large orchestral and choral combinations. If "Flos Campi" is Vaughan Williams's best work, the "Choral Symphony" is probably Holst's

worst. In the first place, the music has no logic or coherence of its own, and depends almost entirely on the poems of Keats, which provide the text, for any impression it may make. In the second place, whatever qualities his admirers may claim for him (and the present writer is cheerfully prepared to dispute his possession of any single one of them), it is impossible even for them to deny that they are the very reverse of Keatsian. The note of ecstasy, the wealth of imagery, the atmosphere of sensuous luxuriance, which are so characteristic of the poetry of Keats, are completely foreign to the music of Holst. For example, anything less Dionysian than the so-called "Song and Bacchanal," a setting of a well-known passage from "Endymion," cannot be imagined. If the composer's name had been Volstead in place of Holst it would have been more appropriate; the music to the procession of Bacchus and his kin, "Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all aflame," would be more suited to a procession of Prohibition agents. Then, again, the delicately wrought poem called "Fancy," with its gently tripping metre, is gabbled by the chorus in such a way that it sounds like a patter song in a suburban music-hall. The only section of the work in which the music corresponds at all to the spirit of the poetry consists in the setting of "Folly's song," probably the most inane and vulgar trifle that Keats ever wrote:—

"When the pig is over-roasted,  
And the cheese is over-toasted,  
When Sir Snap is with his lawyer,  
And Miss Chip has kiss'd the sawyer,  
Huzza for folly O!"

Here Holst is in his element, and it is more profitable to leave him here than to follow him to the last movement in which he takes four poems of Keats, cuts them up into pieces, puts them together again in such a way that a stanza from one poem is followed by one from another, and then proceeds to pour over these mutilated corpses, which were once poetical masterpieces, some of the dullest, most pretentious and bombastic music which has ever been written.

Is it necessary to say, in conclusion, that the above remarks are not the expression merely of a single personal opinion, but that of a very large number of people, including even some who have formerly admired much of this composer's music?

Cecil Gray.

## FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

TO see "An Enemy of the People" at the Century Theatre (Lena Ashwell Players) should once more impress upon the spectator Ibsen's extraordinary humanity, and that he was no mere didactic plaything of his time. The piece also shows to what extremely good use the old technique can be put, technique not so much in the sense of stage carpentry, as in that of inventing a moral as well as personal conflict in which man can reveal his everlasting lineaments. It is not a question of this or that or the other being wrong, and of discovering a panacea, but simply of their being, and being irremediable. Here Ibsen is with the great classics—who, for instance, is not both right and wrong in the "Antigone"?—but Chekhov alone succeeds in this without the classical structure: he makes it part of the texture of life, and not an occasional function. He is a greater poet than Ibsen, though the latter has touches in which he shows at once how humanely and dramatically his mind worked, as when Stockman says, "A man should never go out to battle for freedom and truth in his best trousers." At first view, from the scenery, one was afraid that the interpretation was to be along the time-honoured "dingy-Ibsen" lines, but the production was extremely lively and interesting, the only regrettable part being the final prepared tableau. The acting throughout was on a very high level. Mr. Wilfrid Walter was a very good Stockman indeed, but Mr. W. V. Garrod's Burgomaster was beyond praise. Not a chance missed, not an expression, tone or gesture false, or, better still, forced.

\* First Choral Symphony. By Gustav Holst. (Novello. 4s.)

Wycherley's "Plain Dealer" was written at two periods, in very different moods, the main body being in his most savagely satiric vein, tempered by the Fletcherian *Fidelia* portions, while the later passages—the Critique du Country Wife, they might be called—are in the happiest Molièresque manner. Manly was never meant to be Alceste, the Widow Blackacre is not from Racine's Comtesse de Pimèche (she is from Wilson's "The Cheats"), so that the French and Jonsonian methods are not mingled, as they are in "The Country Wife," so much as violently contrasted. The result is strangely grim and bony; the humour is of Tourneur and Webster—and a blast of life rushes through the whole. But it is at its best an ungainly, if interesting, monster, Wycherley's worst constructed play, and the manner of production of the Renaissance performance did little to smooth it out, for all its cutting. When will actors learn that words have a weight, phrases a rhythm of their own? The portions of the play that came alive were those when anybody spoke naturally, even a servant, and therefore the parts of Novel (Mr. Melville Cooper) and Vernish (Mr. Clarke Smith) told admirably. It goes without saying that Miss Yarde played the Widow with superb raciness. Miss Leah Bateman was commendable in the difficult part of *Fidelia*, and Mr. Ivor Barnard was just the vicious little beast Jerry ought to be. Manly was badly cast, and could not, with all his shouting, be heard half so well as the prompter. Both the Renaissance and the Phoenix will alienate their small permanent nucleus of real lovers of the seventeenth-century drama if they cannot perform less creakily the plays the cultivated part of the audience already knows. Nor was it wise in this instance to cut the witty references to "The Country Wife."

It is very hard to find any connecting idea in the six hundred-odd pictures at the exhibition of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers (recently opened at Burlington House), or to discover any central motive for bringing them together, unless it be that the Royal Academy, anxious to deal a death-blow at modern painting, seeks to achieve this by collecting the worst possible examples of all its conceivable aspects. This has been accomplished with considerable skill, for it is impossible to imagine, in the wildest nightmares of an art critic, an exhibition in which vulgarity, dullness, incompetence, pretentiousness, or sheer ugliness could be so persistently present or so ingeniously combined. One possible source of comfort—slight though this may be—in this very cosmopolitan collection is that there are just as many bad painters and sculptors out of England as in it, and that many of them, the Central Europeans in particular, are bad in an even more flashy, unpleasant manner than the English. Two small pictures there are, amid all this bewildering jumble, which are well worth seeing—and singularly out of place they look—a charming portrait by Renoir and a little sketch by Manet. The few other reputable artists who are represented are shown at their worst.

A Paris correspondent writes: "Some weeks ago you commented, with justifiable sarcasm, on the fuss that was being made about the International Exhibition at Burlington House. The following story, which gives a curious picture of the Committee's notion of manners, is not without interest. M. Kisling, one of the most distinguished of the younger French painters, was invited by this Committee to send the nude which he exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants last spring. Somewhat tardily, it is true, M. Kisling replied that the picture in question was already sold, but that he would be happy to send another. To this the Secretary replied that the Committee would be happy to receive it. M. Kisling, however, took the precaution of sending a telegram to inquire whether it was not now too late, and received the reply that it was not. Upon this he dispatched a nude and a head, that the Committee might have a choice. On receiving these, the Secretary wrote to M. Kisling's agent that as M. Kisling had

not sent the picture for which he asked—the nude of the Salon des Indépendants, already sold—he was unable to accept either. It should be noted that as M. Kisling was late in sending his pictures he was obliged to pay all expenses out of his own pocket. It should be noted further that M. Kisling is not a millionaire. In Paris the general comment on this story is: 'Bah! what else did you expect of the English?' It must be allowed, I think, that it does not redound to our credit; and that the Committee have given a singular example of national courtesy, to put it at the lowest."

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Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, November 21. Orchestral Concert for Children, at 11, at Central Hall.

William Murdoch, Piano Recital, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.

Lener String Quartet, at 5.30, at Wigmore Hall.

John Pauer, Piano Recital, at 3.15, at Grottrian Hall.

The Campden Hill Club Exhibition, at Arlington Gallery.

Sunday, November 22. Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Fog of English Religion," at 11, at South Place Institute.

Mr. H. J. Laski on "Reason and Unreason in Politics," at 5, at Indian Students' Union.

Congreve's "The Mourning Bride," at the New Scala.

Monday, November 23. Mr. Walbrook's "John Drayton, Millionaire," Lena Ashwell Players, at the Century.

Tuesday, November 24. Lener String Quartet, at 5.30, at Wigmore Hall.

Joseph Pembaur, Piano Recital, at 8.15, at Æolian Hall.

Mr. J. A. Spender on "Liberal Foreign Policy," at 8.15, at Caxton Hall.

Wednesday, November 25. "The Madras House," at the Ambassadors.

Lamond, Beethoven Recital, at 3, at Queen's Hall.

Snow String Quartet, at 8.15, at Æolian Hall.

Thursday, November 26. Mr. Bernard Shaw on "The Impossibilities of Freedom," at 8.30, at Kingsway Hall.

Isolde Menges and London Symphony Orchestra, at 8, at Queen's Hall.

Friday, November 27. John Coates, Song Recital, at 8.15, at New Chenil Galleries.

Ingo Simon, Song Recital, at 9, at Wigmore Hall.

OMICRON.

### A DEAD CRAFTSMAN

THE soft glen, heavy with evening,

Is still in unbroken dew—

No paleness is brushed on the grasses,

No crush from his shoe

Is trailed through the airy passes—

Where only a moon moves now

Crushing the dusk through wet grasses,

And dusk in his brow!

That moon stood barely a stripling

Of half a twilight old,

When he found me in dreamy houses

Near the wood's green threshold;

But while he smiled in that twilight

(His dark head slanting bird-wise

To stringed musics heard through my fingers)

Sleep grew on his eyes.

Sleep strained from his mind the beauty

Seen from his cunning hand;

And under the quiet veillings

Of a sleeping land

He moves now unseen with the dew-time,

Unknown to the yellow clay,

In ways of the rainy willows

To dawn on a strange day!

F. R. HIGGINS.



## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

DISRAELI

THE perennial interest in Disraeli is reflected in the publishers' lists. His amusing fantasia, "Ixion in Heaven," has been published this season in a pretty edition, but with decorations by John Austen which do not appeal to me (Cape, 7s. 6d.). Then Mr. D. C. Somervell, a few weeks ago, published "Disraeli and Gladstone" (Jarrolds, 12s. 6d.), in which he attempted, not without some success, the difficult task of writing a biographical duet on the two rival and discordant politicians. And now we have "Disraeli, the Alien Patriot," by E. T. Raymond (Hodder & Stoughton, 18s.), a still more ambitious attempt at biographical interpretation. A strange fate seems inevitably to overtake the biographers of Dizzy. At first sight one would think his character and career to be made for a successful biography, an interpretation in which every facet—personal, social, literary, political, and historical—would sparkle with the reflected brilliance of the biographee. But Disraeli, who mocked and baffled so many in his lifetime, would have smiled grimly to see how many biographers he succeeds in baffling after death. The monumental "Life and Letters" remains only a monument of facts piled one upon the other. It gives us practically all the material for a biography, the material which both Mr. Somervell and Mr. Raymond have attempted to use.

Mr. Somervell's effort undoubtedly deserves both praise and encouragement. His book, as I have said before on this page, is thoroughly entertaining. It is also something more; although it has plenty of clever things in it, its author has respect for certain standards of historical seriousness and truth which in these days of brilliant inaccuracy I find rather soothing. Nevertheless, with all these merits, and although some sort of a figure of Disraeli does emerge from his pages, I do not feel that in the end Mr. Somervell gives us anything but a shadowy figure, a character still wearing the mask and mocking smile which, during his lifetime, Dizzy was so successful in interposing between himself and the world. One reason for Mr. Somervell's want of complete success is due to a fault of method which is very common among biographers, and is most noticeable in Mr. Raymond. A biographer of Disraeli ought to decide whether he intends to write merely a life of Disraeli, *i.e.*, a record of facts which will be an abridged version of the official "Life," or whether his object is an interpretative biography, an explanation of the facts of Disraeli's life, not a consecutive record of his acts. Both Mr. Somervell and Mr. Raymond obviously began with the intention of writing interpretative biography, but they make the mistake of slipping into a mere chronological record of Disraeli's political life. They continually give us facts which are quite irrelevant to their thesis, their interpretation of Disraeli's character. Hence the outline both of that character and of their books is blurred and indistinct.

Mr. Raymond's book suffers from some far more serious faults than this. It has a certain flashy brilliance and superficiality which, I suppose, will appeal to a good many people. Mr. Raymond does not possess that respect for historical truth without which the work of a bio-

grapher becomes either mere foolery or propaganda. I will give an example. Writing of English opinion during the American Civil War he says: "Cobden, Bright, and their like as naturally sided with the North, because they imagined in the representatives of that cause some affinity with the English Nonconformist tradesman." Anyone who has read the speeches and letters of Cobden and Bright, and whose mind is not fuddled with prejudice, knows that this statement is as silly as it is untrue. No less silly and untrue is Mr. Raymond's explanation of why Bright supported and Lord Salisbury opposed the extension of the franchise:—

"Both were equally animated by 'class motives,' but whereas Bright had no motive but that of perpetuating what Disraeli had called 'the thralldom of capital,' Cranborne did think, according to his lights, of the country as a whole."

It is amusing to see a man with the type of mind revealed by these quotations come forward and profess to explain Dizzy to us. The result is necessarily ludicrous. Mr. Raymond's explanation turns out to be that Disraeli was a Jew and an Asiatic. One would have thought that the "blond beast," Teuton, and Celtic theories had sickened people for a little while of this kind of pseudo-scientific racial interpretation of history. Mr. Raymond actually asks us to believe that Disraeli's attitude towards the Bulgarian massacres was dictated by the fact that, some two thousand years before, his ancestors had been born in Asia Minor—by what he calls "the secular sympathy of Jew for Moslem." You might just as well talk of the secular sympathy of Bulgarian for Greek or of Russian for Pole. The important difference between Disraeli and Gladstone did not reside in the fact that one was a Jew and the other an "Englishman"—any more than the important difference between Mr. Raymond and an intelligent Frenchman resides in the fact that one is an Englishman and the other a Frenchman.

I do not profess to understand completely Disraeli's character and many of his actions. But I suspect that the explanation is to be found in the mixture of three or four qualities, none of which is confined to the Jewish or Turkish race. First, he was extremely intelligent, with that kind of intelligence which, when he cared to exercise it and was not too lazy, is popularly called cynical, because it goes straight to the point, stripping off all disguises and pretences. His climb to power and his incredibly skilful handling of the dangerous Russian crisis of 1876 and 1877, which he had himself created, show that he could combine intelligence with great practical ability. But the main motive behind his political activities was not passion, principle, prejudice, party, or even place, as it is with most politicians, but a state of mind which is popularly supposed to belong to artists rather than to practical men. The explanation of Dizzy's political career, of his amazing inconsistencies which made him, as a statesman, at one moment the equal of Bismarck, at the next a fantastic visionary, is to be found, I suspect, in the fact that he liked to treat life and politics as a stage, upon which he would arrange exciting and gorgeous little dramas, play the leading part, manipulate the other puppets.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## THE LIFE OF RACINE

*The Life of Racine.* By MARY DUCLAUX. (Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d.)

WHILE there is little that is new to be told of Racine's life, there is every reason for a sympathetic retelling of what is known. No one is better equipped than Mme. Duclaux for interpreting to English readers the life and works of Racine. She possesses an exceptional knowledge of French authors and reads them against a background of the classics. She understands very fully the peculiar excellencies of French literature during the reign of Louis XIV., without acquiring any of the critical bigotry which sometimes accompanies special knowledge. Even more important to English readers is the clear, orderly mind and neat prose she brings to the task of biographer and critic. The French tradition has not moulded the greatest minds in English literature, but it has been of inestimable service in producing clarity, balance, good sense in all the minor but most necessary branches of the literary art. After one's patience has been sorely tried by the literary sermons and fantasies produced by the untrained English mind, there is a marked pleasure in reading a book by an alert intelligence which has submitted to French discipline. Here one has to register no extravagancies, no follies of indiscipline fancy, nothing perverse, absurd, pretentious, pedantic.

The life of Racine is eminently suited for treatment by one who has caught something of the tranquil manner of the *grand siècle*. Racine's life and work represent the triumph of moral and intellectual discipline over a temperament whose impulses and sensitiveness might have led to extremes. No one who has thought over Racine's life—his youthful break with fostering but tyrannous Port Royal, his tragic love affair with Mlle. du Parc, his other affair with Mlle. Champmeslé, his plunging restiveness under criticism, his conversion and return to Jansenism—can ever have supposed that he was the frigid, pompous sycophant the Romantics liked to pretend he was. The discipline he eventually imposed upon his life is paralleled in his work; for the essence of Racine's poetry is that an intense sensibility is everywhere curbed into a sober and formal beauty. The limitations of Racine's genius are obvious. The error of French classical criticism (especially Voltaire's) was to assert with petulant arrogance that these limitations were the impassable boundaries of the art of tragedy. We now see that the bounds of dramatic literature are wide enough to include both "Athalie" and "Hamlet," but we also admit that the refined, restrained perfection of Racine may be as important to us as the exuberance and adventurousness of the Elizabethans. The difference between the schools needs no labouring; it appears in wholes as well as in the smallest parts. Where one school instinctively makes the utmost display, the other as instinctively holds back, refrains, understates. Says Shakespeare, repeating one of the gnomic commonplaces of literature with all his splendour of metaphor:—

"Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break."

Racine, with the same thought to express, shuns all display and says with a plain, beautiful simplicity:—

"La douleur qui se tait n'en est que plus funeste."

How flat, how dull, how unpoetic, how uninteresting! say the irreconcilable cohort of Romantics. It is not really so. Racine's words are precisely adequate to their dramatic purpose, and no less or more; the gratuitous and superfluous beauties which Shakespeare lavishes would have offended a mind which left nothing to chance inspiration, which planned to reach an end and never to exceed it. And what is true of the merest fragment is true of all Racine's work. The dramatic beauty of his tragedies is apparent even in a translation; the peculiar beauty of his verse is revealed to foreigners very gradually after considerable study, and even then but imperfectly. The famous "O mon souverain roi" tirade in "Esther," the choruses in "Athalie," the opening scene of "Iphigénie," are familiar examples of the beauty of Racine's verse to which one cannot fail to respond; but for my part I confess I have dwelt with perplexity upon lines

quoted by Anatole France, M. Maurras, and even Mr. Lytton Strachey, without perceiving the extraordinary beauty I was told to admire. An Englishman nearly always has to learn by degrees to admire Racine's verse; for this poet compels from us no spontaneous and unpremeditated surrender.

Mme. Duclaux's monograph will contribute towards an understanding of Racine's life and work and, indeed, of French classicism. There are very few who will not learn something by reading her exposition and then rereading Racine; and this book should help many English readers to make a further advance towards conquering this difficult poetic province. For Racine is after all something special, even in French literature. He is alien to all the poets and prose-writers who fill the five centuries between the "Chanson de Roland" and Ronsard; he is alien, as Mme. Duclaux admits, to "Rabelais, Montaigne, Molière, Corneille, Victor Hugo, and the Romantics." His poetry "is the very heart of French literature," says Mme. Duclaux, quoting Sainte-Beuve, but only of that literature which is the complement to the Versailles of Louis XIV.; which is no older than Malherbe and was already attacked during the Regency; which is, after all, but one episode (even if the most admirable) in a very long and various history. Racine is an author to whose charm the English mind is often singularly rebellious; but that is only another reason for thinking that Mme. Duclaux's book will reveal his excellencies to many.

When a new edition of this book is called for, the misprints in the French should be corrected. Few people have yet succeeded in publishing a book in England with faultless French quotations, but misprints are frequent in these pages. For instance, there are four misprints in four lines on page 118; and on page 183 the words in a line from "Esther" have become transposed—"Me charme qui toujours" for "Qui me charme toujours." On page 127 there is a curious example of thinking one thing and writing another. Mme. Duclaux speaks of "... Madame Deshoulières, chiefly remembered now for that pretty song, 'Il pleut, il pleut, Bergère.'" But the author of "Il pleut, il pleut, bergère," was the Revolutionary, Fabre d'Églantine, and not the seventeenth-century poetess. Mme. Duclaux, of course, was thinking of "Les Moutons," and the sheep suggested the shepherdess.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

## THE RAILWAYS

*The Railways, 1825-1925.* By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD. With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. J. H. THOMAS, M.P., P.C. (Labour Publishing Co. Cloth 4s. 6d.; paper 2s. 6d.)

MR. NEWBOLD's book is not a complete success, because he has tried to do two things at once. In part he wished, as the title suggests, to celebrate the centenary of British railways by writing a short sketch of their history; in part he hoped to demonstrate a particular thesis that had been engaging his attention with reference to the evolution of capitalism. And yet the whole book contains less than a hundred pages. The result is that the story of the railways is patchy and overcrowded with names and facts.

Mr. Newbold's thesis is that the history of railways contains the "key to the problems of transition from the earlier or classic form of private enterprise and competition to the more modern aspect of imperialist and ever more monopolistic capitalism." To some extent this is a platitude. In the days before the Company Acts the railways offered almost the only field for industrial development on a Joint Stock basis, and therefore for escape from the "classic form of private enterprise," while, by their very nature, they give facilities for the establishment of monopolies. But that is not the end of the matter. We want to know how railway capital spread its tentacles through the other industries of the country, how it grew to be an international power, and how that power used its enormous influence. This is Mr. Newbold's subject, but he has not allowed himself room to expound it. He must collect more evidence before we can accept all his contentions. A single dispatch, for example, sent by the Russian Ambassador in Paris in October, 1913, is not enough to prove that the Great War was a railway war. It is to be hoped that he will resume his task at greater length elsewhere.



## HELOISE AND ABELARD

**The Letters of Abelard and Heloise.** Translated from the Latin by C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF. (Guy Chapman. £2 2s.)  
**Heloise and Abelard.** By GEORGE MOORE. (Heinemann. 10s 6d.)

It is a pity that this handsome quarto should be distinguished by so much of the editorial sloppiness which now too often attends the publication of "the book beautiful." We are informed of the type used and who set it, as well as of the number of copies printed. We are then confronted by a dedication to Mr. George Moore, in which it is suggested that a translation of these letters would have been unthinkable, had Mr. Moore not recently published a romance on the theme of Heloise. Yet interest in the subject has never flagged since the seventeenth century, and Pope has written on it one of the most beautiful and famous poems in English. Mr. Moncrieff then writes a letter to Mr. Moore, in which he says that had his host (this same Mr. Moore) not been so exceedingly kind on the subject over the walnuts and the wine at Ebury Street, he would never have taken any interest in the question at all—and indeed takes very little interest in it now. He then airs some very superficial views on the character and achievements of Abelard. Mr. Moore, in reply, gracefully accepts the bouquets, controverts Mr. Moncrieff's easy generalization about his hero, and provides what little editorial information we are allowed. In fact, the publishers are evidently of opinion that the unfortunate lovers could hardly sell even a limited edition on art paper unless they could somehow or other be passed off as what the trade calls a "George Moore item."

This is additionally unfortunate, as this book particularly needs an introduction, giving us some history of the editions of the correspondence, and we are not even informed of the provenance of the text used.

The "Historia Calamitatum," or first letter of Abelard, an autobiography written to a friend, was composed about 1135, the correspondence with Heloise following in the succeeding years. The earliest MS., that in the Library at Troyes, dates from over a hundred years later, and was published for the first time by Victor Cousin in 1849, and it is presumably from this text that Mr. Moncrieff has made his translation, though the first printed edition (Paris, 1616) was printed from another MS. The book has often been "translated" into French, and also into English, but except for Mr. Moncrieff's version, there is no tolerable English edition (vide the version in the "Temple Classics"), and only one good translation into French, that published by M. Octave Gréard (second edition, 1875). Mr. Moncrieff's version is therefore most welcome. We should only be grateful for fewer apologies and more useful information.

The sensational nature of the letters and the lateness of the earliest MS. have caused considerable doubt to be cast on the genuineness of the earliest letters and of the autobiographical fragment. Here, again, a little more information, other than that provided *en passant* by Mr. Moore, would be appreciated by serious readers. We may assume, however, that the letters are to all intents and purposes genuine, and may be grateful to Mr. Moncrieff for the translation of a book which is rare for all its fame. His version may be a trifle archaic for some tastes, but he sustains his convention throughout, and never lowers his just reputation as a translator.

Pierre Abelard was born of noble parents at Pallas in Brittany in 1079. He was designed for the army, but soon developed a passion for philosophy and dialectic. His brilliant intellect, great gift of exposition, and personal combativeness brought him early both fame and enemies. He turned on his teachers, attacked both the nominalism and realism prevalent at the time, and forced his way to the front over the prostrate forms of the older generation. By the age of thirty he was one of the most distinguished and best-hated figures in Europe. About 1118 he made the acquaintance of Heloise, then little more than a girl, and fell madly in love with her. She was then resident with her uncle, the Canon Fulbert, and Abelard succeeded in getting taken into the house as her private tutor. Extremely handsome and extremely famous, he had no difficulty in gaining his way with the emotional Heloise. Many years later he gave a frigid account of the seduction, which has earned him much posthumous unpopularity.

A child was born of their union, and Heloise was taken away for the accouchement to Abelard's relatives in Brittany. The story soon leaked out, and Abelard insisted on a secret marriage (it is doubtful if he was then a priest). Heloise resisted this project, fearing to damage his career, and employed to all intents and purposes the words of Pope:—

"Should at my feet the world's great master fall,  
 Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn them all;  
 Not Caesar's Empress would I deign to prove;  
 No! make me mistress to the man I love."

Still Abelard had his way, and the marriage was celebrated, after which Heloise was moved to a nunnery at Argenteuil, where the liaison continued under circumstances of great difficulty, described by Abelard in Letter V. Fulbert, the last to hear of the story, was so furious at his niece being hurried off to a convent, that he burst into Abelard's room, and, as he slept, mutilated him disgracefully.

This atrocious incident is the turning-point in Abelard's life. Till now, he had been torn between love and fame. Now he lived for fame alone, and his violent tragedy obviously caused him to feel horror at the thought of this sensual adventure in his life. However, he continued to look after Heloise, and eventually arranged for her to direct a nunnery at Paraclete, where he himself had at an earlier moment retired. The idea of seeing Heloise was obviously revolting to him, but he never forgot his responsibilities towards her.

Such was the situation when Abelard's autobiography fell into Heloise's hands. She herself, having no love of fame, and having received no physical shock, would have liked to continue the relation on a romantic plane. No one can but be moved by her opening letters:—

"And though exceeding guilty, I am, as thou knowest, exceeding innocent. For it is not the deed, but the intention, that makes the crime. It is not what is done, but the spirit in which it is done, that equity considers. And in what state of mind I have ever been towards thee, only thou who hast knowledge of it can judge. To thy consideration I commit all, I yield in all things to thy testimony. Tell me one thing only, if thou canst, why after our conversion which thou alone didst decree I am fallen into such neglect and oblivion that I am neither refreshed by thy speech and presence nor comforted by a letter in thine absence? . . . Concupiscence joined thee to me rather than affection, the ardour of desire rather than love."

The receipt of this heartrending letter must have placed Abelard in an extremely disagreeable position. He had not, in fact, neglected the interests of Heloise; but he had been violently cured of love, and had sublimated his whole life on to a different plane. All memory of his emotional past had become disgusting to him, and he evidently desired to repress it. This was, no doubt, in part the reason that in the ensuing correspondence he deepens the purely sensual colours of the connection. Also feeling he can hardly emerge with credit, he adopts an uneasy, egotistical tone.

On the whole, he does not come so badly out of the exchange of letters. He could not give Heloise what she wanted, but he makes no attempt to break off the correspondence brutally. Further, his logic-chopping style would not seem so cold to her as it does to us. The tone of the letters changes. They no longer treat of love, and become letters of direction for the management of a nunnery. It was probably impossible for Heloise to be happy, but Abelard may have succeeded in changing the direction of her thoughts, and making her more interested in her new and only possible life. It is difficult to see how he could do more. To be just to Abelard, we must give him the benefit of every doubt. He was a man of violent passions, both intellectual and physical, and he was led by both sides of his nature into continual trouble. Life was in some ways easier for Heloise, who was a whole-hearted and instinctive character. She had far more charm than Abelard, but he perhaps had the greater virtue.

It is agreeable at the same time to welcome a new and cheaper edition of Mr. Moore's own "Heloise and Abelard." For Mr. Moore has the gift of writing flowing English, and he is a master of narrative. To read him is to recapture the pleasure of sailing swiftly over a waveless sea. The novel has already made so many friends that it is unnecessary to notice it in detail now. But we cannot agree with Mr. Scott Moncrieff that Mr. Moore has made these dry bones live. Autobiographies and novels are different things, and both must be judged on their own merits.



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To-Day and To-Morrow Series. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d. each.)

"THERE is a tendency deep-rooted in the human heart to reach out beyond the things of to-day for something not yet attained," says Mr. Fournier D'Albe. Of a few pioneering spirits in every age this would, no doubt, hold true. But it is probable that the anxious curiosity about the future which is now widespread among ordinary intelligent people has had no parallel in the past. When, in 1903, Mr. Wells delivered to the Royal Institution his "discourse" on "The Discovery of the Future" (of which a new and revised edition lies before us), he was hardly, perhaps, a voice crying in the wilderness. But he was addressing a generation to whom the future seemed less uncertain, and therefore of less concern, than it does to us. The world of 1903 had not wholly escaped from the Victorian complacency, which visualized the future, so far as it troubled about it at all, as a gradual broadening down from precedent to precedent, through the operation of some benign and automatic process of evolution. Much water (and blood) have, however, flowed under the bridges since then, and the amazing developments in scientific theory and discovery (with which, spiritually, we seem impotent to keep pace) have combined with the shock of the war to shatter the rosy Victorian dream. The future, which appeared so safe and comfortable, now looms ahead with bewildering possibilities and dangers; and whether we face it in fear or in hope, we cannot evade speculation.

None of the five books under consideration, however, gives us the impression that we have yet advanced far towards the "scientific" discovery of the future for which Mr. Wells, reflecting how scientific induction had enabled us to piece together some picture of the prehistoric past, appealed in 1903. Mr. Wells's application of his own theory is—here, at any rate—very slight, fading away into a mere expression of his own optimistic convictions; and into a similar vagueness most prophecy still tends to vanish. Mr. Joad, alone among our five authors, ventures seriously—Mr. Dobrée, it is true, does it sardonically—upon anything like a detailed forecast. Holding, with Thrasymachus, that "morality is the interest of the stronger," Mr. Joad shows that our conventional morals are menaced to-day by a number of factors—the decay of religious belief; the surplus of women and the rise of woman to an independent status; and, above all, birth-control. These things are uniting to loosen the marriage knot, and, among the more independent spirits, an increase in irregular sexual relationships may be expected. Against this there will arise, among the "herd," a new Puritan revival, akin to American heresy-hunting. Its effects will, however, be merely temporary, and will not succeed in stemming the growing tide of sexual freedom. Divorce reforms and a new attitude towards "the unmarried mother" are inevitable. Beyond this point Mr. Joad does not carry us. He, too, ends on a vague note, asserting that salvation for society will only come "when the life-force can contrive again to send a great religious teacher into the world," who will give us a new morality in which we can positively believe.

In "Prometheus," Professor Jennings gives us a lucid statement of what he conceives to be the present situation of knowledge in relation to genetic science. His main argument is that theory and practice are "hopelessly at variance"; that "the hen of Mendelian theory has hatched a brood of swans"; that heredity and environment are, in a word, so complicated in their interaction that the field of action open to the eugenicist is a very limited one. Whatever eugenic measures are attempted, "so long as biparental inheritance is kept up, the variety, the surprises, the perplexities, the melodrama, that now present themselves among the fruits of the human vine will continue. Capitalists will continue to produce artists, poets, socialists, and labourers; labouring men will give birth to capitalists, to philosophers, to men of science; fools will produce wise men, and wise men will produce fools."

Mr. Fournier D'Albe displays an enthusiasm that is too unrestrained to carry real weight. He has a passion for machinery, and describes one of the new mammoth locomotives of the Southern Railway with the lyrical fervour of a poet addressing his love: "The fires of Hephestus are fashioning a new world. They are welding humanity into a coherent mass"; and if machinery has made war more terrible—well, the bloodiest struggle "is sometimes the least costly on balance." Upon the anvils of Hephestus a "super-natural" edifice of infinite power, as yet but dimly realized, "is being wrought, which in its full beauty and perfection will be nothing less than Divine."

To Mr. Dobrée, however, the "soul" of the machine is not so apparent. In a subtly satirical vein, he visualizes various kinds of theatres in two hundred years' time. There is, for instance, the National Theatre, in which the "stage" is the saucer-like dome of the building, and in which perfumes, shadows, gases, throbbing air, and loud-speakers combine to hypnotize the audience. Or, for "brokers" and other busy City workers, there are "Hurry Theatres," like telephone-boxes in appearance, in which various mechanical devices provide the spectator with "a modicum of organized emotion" in a given number of seconds. Mr. Dobrée's gay little book is not quite in harmony with the sober series in which it appears. But it makes delightful reading.

## BATTLES LONG AGO

**William Archer as Rationalist.** (Watts. 8s. 6d.)

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON, who prefaces this book with a biographical sketch, deplores the fact that some of the leading newspapers, while paying full tribute to William Archer as a dramatic critic and translator, and as a writer on war topics, made no reference in their obituaries to his activity as a rationalist. This volume, therefore, containing a selection of his contributions to the "Literary Guide" and the "R.P.A. Annual," has been published as a memorial to that "other side" of Archer, who was "no less vigorously bent on clearing his countrymen's minds of cant and confusion on matters religious than he ever was on clearing the stage of meretricious drama."

Mr. Robertson maintains that it was because Archer was a worker in other intellectual fields that he was so good a dramatic critic. However that may be, the reverse is certainly true. It is the flashes of Archer the dramatic critic that give to these essays in rationalistic logic an interest and readability which they would not otherwise possess; for, admirable as their manner often is, their matter is familiar to the point of being threadbare. That Archer was passionately sincere and possessed, in spite of his native strain of melancholy, a positive faith in humanity, is clear enough. But he represented a school of rationalism that belongs to a past era; and, like other late and surviving members of that school, he seems merely to be refighting the battles of long ago:—

"My fundamental objection to that [the Roman Catholic] Church, and indeed to Christianity as a whole, is that it is so irreligious. It presents to us such a childish inadequate conception of the Almighty, and diverts our attention from the real majesty and marvel of the universe to a fairy-tale cosmogony, the highly unedifying history of a Semitic tribe, and a most immoral fragment of folklore about an irascible Creator, childishly irritated with creatures he had thrust into being, and then no less capriciously reconciled to a favoured few among them by the vicarious torture of an innocent person—whether man or god does not matter."

There, in a few lines, is the whole kernel of these essays, throughout which no distinction is drawn between Christianity and clericalism, and scant recognition made of the vast strides taken by theology during the last few decades from the old idea of the "Scapegoat Saviour." How grotesquely the above passage caricatures the outlook of the more advanced Christian apologists of our own time those who are acquainted with the Student Christian Movement or other similar bodies will quickly recognize. It is characteristic of the group of rationalists to which Archer belonged that they seem always to be quarrelling with the mentality of fifty years ago as if it were still the prevailing mentality of to-day; and it is this fact which gives to their writings an air of pathetic fadedness and futility.

GILBERT THOMAS.

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## SHADES OF THE PRISON-HOUSE

**A Poet's Alphabet.** By W. H. DAVIES. (Cape, 3s. 6d.)

MR. DAVIES has never put away childish things, and in this lies the strength and the weakness of his poetry. His diction is by no means faultless, his rhythms are unambitious and of no particular distinction, and his technique generally is lacking in the elaborate finish and dexterity which one might have expected from a craftsman who has devoted almost all his attention to the short lyric. On the other hand, he writes in a vein of genuine inspiration. Its limits are narrow, but he rarely attempts to exceed them, and within them he has contrived to produce a body of poetry of distinctive charm. It is useless to turn to Mr. Davies for any reflection of the perplexities which trouble this superannuated world, but one may watch instead the spontaneous interest of a child in its immediate environment. He has an eye for little more than meadow, grove, and stream:—

"What lovely meadows have I seen in the Sun,  
With their large families of little flowers  
Smiling beneath the quiet, peaceful skies!  
Let no man trespass on these happy hours,  
And think acquaintance rests in these two eyes."

A sunbeam falls on the landscape painting before his eyes,  
and he is amazed

"... to see that man  
Made so much less immortal in my sight";

and he enjoys music because it recalls to him "the very soul and tenderness" of the sounds of field and hedgerow. The range of Mr. Davies's interests is narrow, but he is never dull, because his way of looking at the common things which he describes is always fresh and original. Even the faultiness of his diction contributes something to the effect, like the lisp of a child.

The freshness of his early outlook has on the whole been little impaired by advancing years, but in his later work one may notice a new note of reflectiveness and of disquiet, as he remembers that Time that gave doth now his gift confound.

"I need no glass to help my eyes,  
My naked sight shows no decline;  
A rich blind man would give his all  
For one of these two jewels of mine.

But I'd give any poor blind man  
One of these precious jewels free—  
Could he restore the inward sight  
That Time is taking away from me."

That is the burden of the twenty-six poems contained in Mr. Davies's latest book. Apart from one or two pieces, such as "Venus," in his earlier manner, he is no longer content merely to record—he is compelled to reflect on what he has seen. The result is, on the whole, inferior to his former work. Several of the poems possess a certain charm, but they raise questions and feelings which require to be treated in a more elaborate form than that of "Rich Days" or "A Great Time," and with a bolder and stronger flight of the imagination than Mr. Davies is capable of.

## SAVE THE CHILDREN

**Child Saving and Child Training: the Budapest Scheme.** By JULIE EVE VAJKAI. (The World's Children, Ltd.)

**Child Life in Westminster.** With a Foreword by BISHOP GORE. (The World's Children, Ltd.)

EVEN the least attentive know the elements of child welfare nowadays; even the most profoundly bored Members of Parliament and the most benighted Borough Councillors have to turn a jaded attention to matters of health and training, and have to learn to speak knowingly about breast feeding, and sunlight, and sanitation. For women got votes as long ago as 1918.

Nevertheless, clearly as we all know *how* to set about child saving, there remains a great deal which is not *done*; and the two little booklets issued by the Save the Children Fund are painfully instructive reading. Not that they are either of them written in a despairing tone; on the contrary, there is a deliberate optimism about them both. But then there are such dreadful things between the lines!

Mme. Julie Vajkai's pamphlet describes the new experiment of "Work Schools" which she has set up for the children who are forced to leave school at twelve years old in Budapest. The enterprise is carried on and financed by the Save the Children Fund, and presupposes, of course, the prevailing conditions in Hungary—the incredible housing shortage, the continued scarcity of food, and the devastating poverty. Education for these children stops short a great many years too soon, and the good standard of the Declaration of Geneva is still a terribly long way off; but for all that Mme. Vajkai writes with a courage which must spring from the courage of the young people with whom and for whom she works.

The other little book, also, has most of its morals written between the lines. It is a survey, conducted by the Council of the Save the Children Fund, into how far the clauses of "The Children's Charter" are being carried out in the City of Westminster at this moment, with an account of all the multifarious efforts made on behalf of children, and of the agencies, both public and voluntary, which exist to meet their needs.

Out of the pages of this bald and unemotional survey one moral jumps forth, and fairly hits the reader in the eye; and that moral is that the home has broken down. We may sentimentalize as we will, and regret till we are black in the face; or, if we prefer, we may turn our eyes the other way; but the fact remains the same. For all the schools and clinics in the world, and all the careful adjustments and well-thought-out schemes in creation, will be useless to the child whose home has failed; and the little creatures will grow up unhealthy, uneducated, and unkempt whatever we may do. And while they continue in kennels, overcrowded, contaminated, and in ruins, the homes of the children are bound to fail. Not the best father nor the best mother in the world can counteract the grind of slum poverty, slum sanitation, and slum life; and neither can the outside agencies. Change this, then, the booklet teaches, and all the rest may come into play; tolerate it, and the rest is of little avail.

## THE GOLDEN AGE OF FURNITURE

**Furniture in England from 1660 to 1760.** By FRANCIS LENYON. Second Edition, revised. (Batsford. £2 10s.)

TO the student of social history, manners, and fashion, no less than to the connoisseur and lover of beautiful things, this book of Mr. Lenyon's must have endless fascination. Furniture and domestic architecture, perhaps even more than dress or cuisine, certainly far more than the more exalted arts, are indicative of the social character of an age, and the period of which Mr. Lenyon writes, and which he illustrates with the aid of many fine photographs, is the age in which furniture was brought to its greatest technical and artistic perfection in England. It was an age in which people not only were willing to take immense trouble and thought about their houses and surroundings, when great wealth, combined with a love of fine possessions, encouraged the nobility to collect works of art of all kinds from all over Europe and Asia; it was also an age in which there existed the desire and enterprise to encourage contemporary native work. A rich man might hand over not only the building but also the decorating and furnishing of his new house to architects such as Daniel Marot, William Kent, or, later, Robert Adam. Fashions changed; imitations first of one nation, then of another, were introduced; but contemporary artists had opportunities of finding patronage for their ambitions and of realizing their designs, and the disastrous "antique"-hunting, the love of the antique for antique's sake, was unheard of till a much later date.

In 1660, the beginning of the period treated by Mr. Lenyon, English furniture was just emerging, under Dutch and French influence, from the solid, but rough and cumbersome, style of the Tudor tradition, and foreign furniture was largely imported. Under its influence English craftsmanship improved, so that Evelyn was able to write: "Locksmiths, Joiners and Cabinet-Makers, and the like, from very vulgar and Pitiful Artists are now come to Produce Works as curious for the filing and admirable for their Dexterity in Contriving, as any we meet with abroad." The taste for

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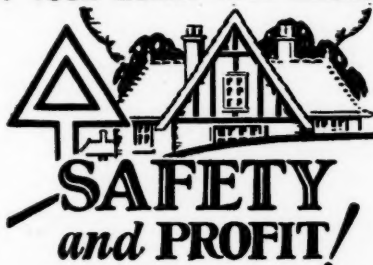
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marquetry, silver furniture (with which the bedroom of Louise de la Kerouaille was completely equipped), and lacquer-work dates from this time. Screens were imported from China, responsible in the first place, no doubt, for the "Chinese" taste which became the fashion some fifty years later. The next influence, the Venetian, is associated chiefly with the name of William Kent, who, travelling in Italy in the early eighteenth century, became enamoured of Italian baroque. On his return to England he had to devise—and accomplished it most successfully—schemes of decoration and furniture which, Venetian in derivation, should yet harmonize with the Classical and Palladian buildings then being erected. About 1750 a new craze produced those curious, sometimes amusing, often hideous objects in the Chinese and Gothic styles. In 1754 was published "a new book of Chinese designs calculated to improve the present taste." Though at the time short-lived, and soon superseded by the rather flimsy classical reaction of Robert Adam, it is without doubt at this moment that the seeds of the great Romantic Revival were sown which was ultimately to affect so profoundly not only furniture, but all art and all life.

## ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

THE following historical works deserve notice: "Gleanings from Irish History," by W. F. T. Butler (Longmans, 12s. 6d.); "The Golden Age of the Medici (Cosimo, Piero, Lorenzo de' Medici)," by Selwyn Brinton (Methuen, 15s.); "The Approach to the Reformation," by Roger B. Lloyd (Parsons, 6s.); "Lectures on Foreign History, 1494-1789," by J. M. Thompson (Oxford: Blackwell, 7s. 6d.); "The Rise and Progress of Assyriology," by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge (Hopkinson, 25s.).

In "The Senate and the League of Nations," by Henry Cabot Lodge (Scribners, 16s.), Senator Lodge gives a detailed account of the League of Nations controversy in the Senate.

"The 'Teddy' Expedition," by Kai R. Dahl, translated by Grace Isabel Colbron (Appleton, 10s. 6d.), tells the story of the Danish expedition to Greenland; "Sunlight in New Granada," by William McFee (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.), is a brightly written account of a journey to Bogota; "Temple Bells and Silver Sails," by Elizabeth C. Enders (Appleton, 10s. 6d.), is a book about China.

"Story Lives of Nineteenth-Century Authors," by R. Brimley Johnson (Wells Gardner, 4s. 6d.), gives an account of the lives of Thackeray, George Eliot, Browning, Tennyson, Arnold, Butler, and Stevenson. "The Silver Treasury of English Lyrics," edited by T. Earle Welby (Chapman & Hall, 10s. 6d.), is a collection of the "best lyrics" not included in the "Golden Treasury."

"Beethoven," by Paul Bekker, translated and adapted from the German by M. M. Bozman (Dent, 10s. 6d.), is the latest volume in "Dent's International Library of Books on Music." "Fifty Favourite Operas," by Paul England (Harrap, 12s. 6d.), is illustrated, and gives popular accounts of the operas included.

"Warfare," by Oliver Spaulding, Hoffman Nickerson, and John W. Wright (Harrap, 18s.), is a study by three American officers of military methods from the earliest times to the death of Frederick the Great.

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

**The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667.** Vol. IV., *Travels in Europe, 1639-1647.* Edited by Lt.-Col. Sir RICHARD CARNAC TEMPLE, Bt., C.B. (Hakluyt Society.)

**Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623-1667.** Edited by V. T. HARLOW, F.R.Hist.S. (Hakluyt Society.)

The Hakluyt Society have added to their publications two admirably edited volumes of great historical interest. The first gives us the observations of a very intelligent seventeenth-century traveller in England and Wales, Holland, Poland, and Northern Russia, illustrated mainly from his own sketches of buildings and costumes. The second comprises documents relating to the early stages of

settlement in the West Indies and Guiana, and to De Ruyter's West Indian raid of 1665. Among the contemporary and earlier maps reproduced is one made by or for Raleigh, showing El Dorado and the mythical Lake of Manoa.

**Wynkyn de Worde and His Contemporaries, from the Death of Caxton to 1535.** By HENRY R. PLOMER. (Grafton. 21s.)

This well-produced book will appeal to all who are interested in printing and its history. Mr. Plomer deals with the lives and work of Caxton's immediate successors: De Worde, Pynson, Letton, William de Machlinia, Julian Notary, the two Faques, the two Rastells, Robert Copland, Pepwell, Skot, eight other London printers, and the provincial and Scottish presses. His book is a notable contribution to the history of printing. It contains some excellent reproductions of pages from De Worde's, Pynson's, and other printers' books, and also of types used by De Worde and Pynson.

**The Human Factor in Business.** By B. SEEBOHM ROWNTREE. (Longmans. 2s. 6d.)

This is the second edition of Mr. Seebohm Rowntree's book, in which he describes the attempt at the Cocoa Works, York, to deal with the human problems of business administration. The book has been thoroughly revised, partly rewritten, and brought up to date. It deals with the subject under five heads: wages, hours and working conditions, economic security of the workers, status of the workers, and the workers' share in profits. It is notable that in the Cocoa Works there is now no Saturday work, the hours being from 7.30 to 5 on Monday and Friday, and from 7.30 to 5.30 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, with one hour for dinner on each day.

**The History of Tattooing and Its Significance.** By W. D. HAMBLBY, B.Sc. (Witherby. 25s.)

Tattooing is one of the most interesting and at the same time one of the most puzzling of the phenomena with which the anthropologist has to deal. It appears to be both too complicated in the forms which it assumes and too wide in its distribution to be explained by the mere impulse for self-adornment. In this volume Mr. Hamblby has collected facts from all over the world relating to the practice, and by so doing has furnished anthropologists with a large quantity of useful material. The book is particularly to be welcomed for the reason that it represents the first serious contribution to the subject since Joest's "Die Tatowierung," which appeared as early as 1887. Unfortunately, as is so often the case with anthropological data, the quantity of facts is disproportionate to the amount of theory which can legitimately be evolved to systematize them. Mr. Hamblby attempts to show that tattooing is associated, as evidenced by various taboos, with a sacred condition of the subject, and considers, therefore, that the ceremony may have a religious origin. The idea is plausible, although, of course, almost all primitive procedure is bound up with taboos of some sort. The trouble is that tattooing, scarification and body-marking were only first investigated by anthropologists at a time when the practices had already begun to degenerate, so that their original significance is probably lost for ever. Anyway, the facts are interesting enough in themselves and are there in this carefully compiled volume for the reader to draw his own conclusions from them.

**Dramatic Sequels.** By ST. JOHN HANKIN. (Secker. 7s. 6d.)

These airy somethings of Hankin's early wit were originally contributed to PUNCH, and were printed in book form in 1901. Ranging from a sequel to the "Alcestis" of Euripides to one on "Cæsar and Cleopatra," they are rather unequal, but only the one to "Hamlet" is bad. Hankin's clear intelligence and quick mind, his style and his wit, are already abundantly visible here, and this should make an admirable bed-book.

**The Conduct of the Kitchen.** By X. MARCEL BOULESTIN. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d.)

This is another of M. Boulestin's admirable cookery books. The sub-title is "How to Keep a Good Table on Sixteen Shillings a Week." There is an excellent chapter on Sunday suppers—those curious meals which may be so delicious and which too often are so deplorable—and M. Boulestin shows himself to be a believer in the chafing-dish. He gives a fascinating list of Menus for the Week, and the recipes for the dishes included and for many others follow at the end of the book.





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**BOOKS.**—Stendhal's *Red and Black*, trans. by Robins, 2 vols., 1898, 25s.; Stendhal's *La Chartreuse de Parme*, trans. by Robins, with 30 Etchings, 1899, 3 vols., 42s.; Butler's *Hudibras*, illus. by Hogarth, 2 vols., call. 35s.; Arthur Machen's *Works* "Caeleion" Edition, 9 vols., £5 5s.; Forlong's *Rivers of Life*, 3 vols., rare, £15; Burton's *Arabian Nights*, 17 vols., £15; Rousseau's *Confessions*, 2 vols., privately printed, 24s.; Browning's *Poetical Works*, fine set, 16 vols., £3 10s.; London Tradesmen's *Cards of the 18th Century*, by Ambrose Heal, 1925, £2 2s.; Aubrey Beardsley, *The Uncollected Work of*, £2 2s., 1925; Lord Lytton's *Works*, "Knebworth" Edition, 40 vols., £3 10s.; Aldous Huxley's *Antic Hay*, 1st Edit., 1923, 15s.; *Golden Asse of Apuleius*, trans. by Adlington, 1913, £2 2s.; Sanger's *History of Prostitution*, 1919, 16s.; *Masculine Cross and Ancient Sex Worship*, &c., Moore versus Harris, limited issue, 1921, £3 3s.; George Moore's *Esther Waters*, signed copy, 1920, £3 3s.; *Paradise Lost*, Doves Press edit., £15, 1902; Wilde's *Dorian Gray*, illus., 1908, 13s.; Henry Fielding's *Works*, Best edit., Intro. by Gosse, 12 vols., £6 6s., 1896; Purchas, his *Pilgrimes*, 5 vols., folio, call. fine copy of this rare book of travels, 1625-1636, £105; Hall's *Adolescence*, 2 vols., 1905, £2 2s.; The *Graphic*, 36 vols., £12; Lohengrin, illustrated by Pogany, signed by the Artist, full vellum, £2 10s.; Frazer's *Golden Bough*, 12 vols., £7 7s.; Parkyn's *Prehistoric Art*, 12s. 6d.; Davis, with the "Aurora" in the *Antarctic*, 7s. 6d., pub. 18s.; Fox-Davies' *Book of Public Arms*, new copy, 42s., for 14s.; *Astare* concerning Lord Byron, by Earl Lovelace, only 125 copies done, £3 10s.; Perrin's *British Flowering Plants*, numerous coloured plates, 4 vols., £3 10s., 1924; Lamb's *Last Essays of Elia*, 1835, first edition, £7 10s.; Villari, *Life and Times of Machiavelli*, 2 vols., 1892, £2 2s.; Madden's *United Irishmen*, many illus., 12 vols., £3, 1916; Stonham's *Birds of the British Isles*, complete set, £5 5s.; Robinson's *Old Naval Prints*, £3 3s.; Ellis, *Life of Wagner*, 6 vols., 32s., 1900; Hartmann's *Confucius*, £2 2s.; Lord Dunsany's *Plays of Gods and Men*, 1st Edit., 1917, 25s.; Lord Dunsany's *A Dreamer's Tales*, 1st Edit., 1910, £2 10s.; Weber's *Tales of the East*, 1812, 3 vols., £3 3s.; King's *Chelsea Porcelain*, Edit. de Luxe, 1822, £6 6s.; Hobson, *Wares of the Ming Dynasty*, Edit. de Luxe, £7 7s.; *Costume of the Netherlands*, 30 coloured plates, 1817, £4 4s.; Strang's *Earth Flend*, signed copy, £3 10s. If you want a book and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me! I am the most expert bookfinder extant.—**BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP**, John Bright Street, Birmingham. WANTED.—Milne's *When We were Very Young*, 1st ed., 30s. offered.

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The Creighton Lecture entitled "Bentham as Political Inventor" will be given by Professor **GRAHAM WALLAS, M.A., Litt.D.** (Emeritus Professor of Political Science in the University), at **KING'S COLLEGE** (Strand, W.C. 2), on **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30th, 1925**, at 5.30 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Dr. Ernest Barker, M.A., D.Litt., LL.D., Principal of King's College. **ADMISSION FREE, BY TICKET** to be obtained from the Registrar, King's College, Strand, W.C. 2.

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by **Mr. J. A. Spender** on

## "LIBERAL FOREIGN POLICY"

(second of a series of six Lectures on The Liberal Point of View) at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Tuesday, November 24th, at 8.15 p.m.

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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## NEW ISSUES—SNIA-VISCOSA—LIRA EXCHANGE

WITH public issues falling like a downpour this week, some dullness might be expected in the stock markets. The Gold Coast loan was almost entirely left with underwriters. The Western Australian and Tasmanian loans, it is thought, will be successful. Part of the Bristol Corporation loan has been placed firm, and Brighton has a fair chance. Another batch of foreign and colonial loans is in preparation, and if the underwriters are left with anything like the proportion of these issues that had to be taken up by the underwriters of the Gold Coast loan, the effect on the markets will be very depressing. In all probability so glaring a mistake in price will not be repeated. Stock Exchange activity has centred in the speculative markets, particularly rubber shares, on the rise in the commodity prices.

Perhaps the most interesting employment of British capital abroad since the raising of the embargo has been the purchase of 1,000,000 shares of 200 lire each in Snia-Viscosa by Hambro's Bank, dealings in which opened on the London Stock Exchange this week at about £3½. What Ford is in the motor world Snia-Viscosa is in the world of artificial silk. Its output for the first six months of this year amounted to 14½ per cent. of the total European production. An interesting feature of its activity is the production on a large scale of a new fibre "Sniafil," which is an artificial wool. The condition of the purchase of the shares of Snia-Viscosa by Hambro's Bank is that a large factory for the manufacture of this artificial wool shall be constructed in England. The increase in the Company's output has been spectacular. In 1920 it amounted to 1,186,853 lbs., in 1922 3,703,100 lbs., in 1923 11,687,526 lbs., and last year 19,841,000 lbs. This year, taking into consideration the erection of new plants, it is estimated that the production of the Company will amount to 39,682,800 lbs. Probably the quality of the Company's products is not as uniformly high as that of Courtauld's, but with an abundant supply of cheap labour, and equipped for mass production, the Company has an immense advantage and can undersell other countries in the class of artificial silk produced. 75 per cent. of its output is exported.

This year on a capital of 600 million lire (now raised to 1,000 million) it is estimated that the net profits should amount to over 140,000,000 lire, and the Chairman has stated that he expects to be in a position to propose a dividend at the rate of 25 lire a share or 12½ per cent., as against 10 per cent. in 1924. This dividend would require 75 million lire, leaving a large balance to be applied to reserve or carried forward. The shares are currently quoted on the Milan stock exchange at 400 lire, which is about £3 6s. 6d. at the present rate of exchange. At the present price of £3 4s. 6d. Snia-Viscosa shares in London appear to be the only artificial silk shares which do not fully discount future possibilities. They yield £6 10s. on the basis of a 12½ per cent. dividend and an exchange of 120 lire to the £. The dividends are paid free of Italian income tax.

With the ethics of Italian methods of Government we are not called upon to deal on this page, but it is worth while to consider the future of the lira, which has recently shown signs of being well in hand. To give its recent history, it may be recalled that on July 1st it had fallen to 146½—its lowest. Then the Government took action, severe restrictions were imposed upon dealings in foreign exchange, and speculation was discouraged. Count Volpi was appointed Finance Minister and confidence was restored. The lira improved to 132 by August 1st, and 124 by September

1st. A week later there was a bear squeeze and the lira rose to 113½. This improvement was not held, and it fell to nearly 120 by the end of September. Near this figure it has since shown steadiness. The difficulty has been the adverse trade balance. In the first eight months of the present year the excess of imports over exports has amounted to lire 6,716 millions as against an excess of lire 3,844 millions in the corresponding period of 1924. It seems that in 1925 the excess of imports over exports will be about lire 8,000 millions as against lire 5,070 millions in 1924. Whether the invisible net exports will be sufficient to offset this unfavourable trade balance independently of foreign loans has seemed doubtful, but an increase is noticeable in the export trades, and such deals as the sale of a million Snia-Viscosa shares to London and another million to New York will undoubtedly help the exchange. And several factors have moved in favour of the stability of the lira. First, Government finances show steady improvement. For the first quarter of the financial year 1925-26 (July to September) revenue has exceeded expenditure by lire 121 millions. The Italian finances are very different from the French. There is no Treasury problem. There is a revenue surplus, and the Italian Treasury has not to come to the market continually in search of money.

Secondly, the debt settlement with the United States is more favourable to the debtor than any the American Commission has yet made. Payment of the principal \$1,648,000,000 is spread over sixty-two years, and interest is to be about 1 per cent. No payment is to be made for five years, then one-eighth of 1 per cent. for ten years, rising each decade until 2 per cent. is paid in the last seven years. As soon as the war debt to Great Britain is settled (£582,510,000) Italy will have reached the final stage in the stabilization of the lira when a return to gold on a new gold parity becomes possible. This will no doubt be accomplished by a gold stabilization loan raised in New York and London. A return to gold on the basis of something like 120 to the £ would undoubtedly help the export trades. It is, of course, arguable that a slightly depreciating exchange always helps export trades, but in the case of Italy it is more important to have stability, as at present industries are suffering from a 7 per cent. Bank rate and restrictions on exchange, which upset, if they do not actually prevent, forward commercial quotations. A sensible return to gold on the basis of the purchasing par parity would undoubtedly stimulate trade activity. There is, of course, the inherent political risk to the exchange. What would have happened if the assassin's gun had killed Signor Mussolini no one can tell, but it is clearly improbable that on the fall of Mussolini Italy would be plunged into chaos and anarchy as was Mexico on the fall of the benevolent dictator Porfirio Diaz. Industries in Italy, favoured by electric power and an abundant supply of cheap labour as a result of the emigration restriction, have within the last few years made rapid strides. Unemployment has fallen, and nearly all industries are fully occupied and prospering. These conditions do not make for revolution and chaos.

The Vauxhall Motors, Ltd., has written to correct our statement that it was "apparently one of the five companies which made requests to the General Motors for an arrangement similar to that offered to the Austin Motor Company." The approach which preceded the negotiations just about to be completed originated, it says, with the General Motors Corporation. The opposite approach, however, would have been no reproach to Vauxhall Motors, Ltd., and our sole desire was to call attention to an important amalgamation and a good investment in Vauxhall 7 per cent. Mortgage Debenture.





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